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THE BRIDAL
AND THE BRIDLE;

OR,

OUR HONEYMOON-TRIP IN THE EAST,

IN 1850.

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TO
THOMAS DE G^z DE FONBLANQUE,
HER MAJESTY'S CONSUL GENERAL
FOR SERVIA,
THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED,
WITH THE BEST WISHES
OF
THE AUTHOR.



THE BRIDAL AND THE BRIDLE.

CHAPTER I.

I WAS married, gentle reader, in Belgium, and proceeded to Paris, on the twenty-fourth day of the month of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty, intending to spend the "month of mel" there. Tiring, however, very early of the "Trois Frères" and the "Opéra Comique," Vaudevilles and Vol-au-vents, I determined to signalize the Honey-

moon by penetrating a land, where, without vanity, I may say very few English couples have ever spent theirs. My wife, sympathizing with my vagrant spirit and bad taste, we agreed to proceed at once to Turkey.

As far as I can remember, the colloquy that preceded our departure from Paris was pretty much as follows:—

“Shall we go to Turkey, Emily?”

“I am quite ready.”

“Shall we go through Bosnia, and ride to Constantinople?”

“Nothing I should like better.”

And in two days we were off for Marseilles, whence we soon reached Leghorn, and passing rapidly through Pisa, Florence, Bologna, and Padua, sailed from Venice to Trieste, and inquired which was the best route to the Turkish frontier.

The consul there appeared very willing

to give any information ; but, unfortunately, as it happened, told us the route was perfectly safe from Ottochaz to Bosna-Serai ; that there had been a rebellion against the Pacha of Bosnia ; but that all was quiet again, and the way as free from robbers as the Edgware Road.

Our courier, an Italian, named Giovanni Amado, had been to Constantinople, and possessed a smattering of the Turkish language ; but was a timid man, knew nothing of geography from maps, and understood no route but the one he had been by previously.

He credited every report he heard in Trieste and Venice, about the difficulties and dangers of the route, and gravely informed us daily, that the road was long, filled with robbers, impassable mountains, fevers, and plague, but totally without food or horses ; and he in fact menaced us with

fire, famine, sword, and pestilence, at every step, all of which was forcibly contrasted with the safe inglorious route by sea.

Nor was this all; for, giving no credence to maps, and all to report, he assured us that we should have to pass through fabulous towns and imaginary countries, one and all filled with "Gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire;" and not content with these visionary perils, he assured us that the diligence to Fiume was always guarded by four carabinieri; that if we passed by the way of Carlstadt, the Austrians would fire on us for Turkish spies, and the Turks for Austrians, the whole of Bosnia being a hot-bed of revolution.

Revolutions! How I hate the word! There never was yet a revolution in any Oriental country, though there have been countless rebellions, more or less successful.

However much these wild stories might

have shaken the nerves and perturbed the unadventurous spirit of the unhappy native of Messina, whose hard doom it was to be Sancho Panza to so Quixotic a pair, the only effect of Giovanni's doleful face and hobgoblin stories upon us, was that of making us laugh, in a manner he considered demented. We had come many miles to get away from tame people, and the wilder the tales of Illyrian Macheaths grew, the greater was our amusement.

At last our purchases were completed, and with three carpet bags, a bundle of cloaks, and a heap of arms, we started from the Albergo Nazionale in a rickety old post-carriage with three horses, and a broken door, Giovanni looking on us as on people doomed to perish before reaching Fiume.

Emerging from Trieste, we rattled along a rough stony road, up hill and down dale, changing carriages at every post, and a good

deal astonished, at the end of one stage, to find a landau without a door, and to be compelled to make a harlequin entry through the window.

The costumes of the Contadini grew gradually wilder and stranger: bare-footed women, with long, white cloths bound round their heads, and floating in the wind, and with simple white chemises, or rather blouses, for all other garments, toiled in the fields like so many ghastly spectres, and looked, in the dim grey mist, like so many Ghoules tearing open graves, to furnish forth their hellish banquet. Very few men were seen: they were, in all probability, mostly serving in the army; and those few were indolently lounging by the road-side, smoking huge pipes.

The most striking part of their costumes was their sandals, of classic shape, but made of plaited rushes. I must say they

are a most civil people, as far as salutations go,—never did I see so many broad-brimmed hats pulled off to a carriage before. And yet I doubt if we looked imposing, gazing from the glassless windows of an unvarnished post calèche.

All the aged are apparently beggars. We found one old man on his knees, at the brow of a hill, and the children pursued us in swarms, holding up their unwashed hands in an imploring attitude, and screaming at the top of their voices for “baccanal” and “schuszanore,” which I take to mean much the same as baksheesh and carità.

The boys are comparatively clumsy mendicants; but the girls, while running astonishingly fast, contrive alternately to hold up their joined hands in a Mary Magdalene attitude of supplication, and to throw somersets in the road, screaming shrilly the whole time for kreutzers, in the name of the

Virgin. It was plain they had cultivated mendicity as an art.

We rolled along among the rugged hills of Illyria until evening, and just as the sun was setting, we reached the barrier of Fiume, where our passport was demanded, and an incredible difficulty made about its being viséed the same evening. Ten minutes more, and we were looking out of the windows of the inn facing the sea.

A very pretty little toy town is Fiume. Embosomed among purple mountains, with the calm blue sea water of its gulf looking like a clear azure lake, and almost shut in by heathy headlands. A more perfect salt-water lake can hardly be imagined, dotted as it is, with the snowy-sailed brigantines and white-winged feluccas of the Adriatic. I see little reason why Fiume should not one day rival Trieste.

Among the *facchini* of the inn was a

peculiarly bustling little old man, who I believe to be mad, and who accosted us in a mixture of Croatian and German, apparently asking for something. He certainly said that he was a robber, or some such thing; and not content with this agreeable announcement, he was pleased to proclaim himself a Cravat or Cravate, tugging the while at his neckerchief, as if to pun upon his nationality. To pacify him, we assured him that we considered him an undoubted Cravat, and that he had better explain himself to the courier. This, however, he declined doing, saying, "because I am the house-boy!" May he be more intelligible to my readers than he was to us!

We left Fiume next morning; had a severe search at the gate, and another still more rigid at the frontier of Croatia, a mile farther on. We passed through the striped barrier, and without a regret bade adieu to

Illyria. A few miles off, in a bold rocky pass, with a cascade boiling down it, we passed a rock with a Croatian inscription on it in gold letters, of which I could only distinguish the name of the Ban, "Jelazka" I think it was written. By the bye, very few people in England appear to know how to pronounce the name of Jellachich, but call him "Jellysitch," "Hellakick," "Yellowcheck," and many similar euphonious appellations. I have the authority of a Croatian captain of cavalry for calling him "Yellahsish," or "sitz."

There was a highly respectable looking Turk, standing before this inscription, which he was endeavouring to decipher with the help of a dictionary. I never before heard of a Slave—Ainsworth or Donnegan.

The women of Croatia look exceedingly like Albanians, or something between Bedouin Arabs and Arnauts. They all wear

pure white dresses, simple and loose in form, and for the most part, picturesquely short. Many of them have Greek tasseled caps of scarlet, or blue and red turbans; scarlet sashes are very common among both sexes. Some miles from Fiume, the mountains assume a bold and savage character, their rugged sides scarcely fringed by a single tree, their peaks hidden in endless mist and cloud.

An old man told us it never ceased raining there, and was always a cold snowy land. The blasts from the mountains are extremely chilly and cutting, and I advise no traveller with weak lungs to neglect a hare-skin and worsted comforter.

The postboys are the most stupid set of boors conceivable, who never lay by their pipes, except to blow their horns, which they cause to discourse the most eloquent discord. The women are ragged, the chil-

dren nearly naked; and the men are savage-looking fellows, with huge worked pouches covered with deep worsted fringe, suspended at their sides, and leather belts buckled round their waists. There are no gentlemen to be seen, with the exception of some few Austrian officers.

All the farmers, who can afford it, wear high boots. The houses are nothing but stone cabins, very much sunk in the earth. We stopped at a post-house, where carriages were not, and where we were obliged to take a light two-horse cart, made of wicker-work, low, open, without seats of any kind, equally destitute of springs, and excessively like a large clothes' basket on four wheels. I may as well mention, *en passant*, that these light waggons are the usual style of equipage in Croatia.

We induced the postmaster to put a Robinson Crusoe-like roof of willow poles

and straw matting over it, by a random threat, thrown out by our courier, of complaining to the governor of the next town of his conduct if he did not do so; and while it was being constructed, we went in and petted his dog, a large intelligent animal, and as the old woman said, very like a Christian. For, when his master offered him the piece of bread he begged for, telling him it was "für die Juden," he rejected it with scorn and intense disgust; while he showed the utmost satisfaction in eating it, when assured that it was "für die Christen."

Our thatch concluded, we bade adieu to our kind host and his zealous quadruped, and after a somewhat fatiguing journey, reached Sevrigny, two posts from Carlstadt, at about eight o'clock. Giovanni started for the "Castle," where we were told the Graf and the postmaster lived, in search of

horses, leaving us to the allurements of the *gens* at the inn, who Siren-like, besought us to enter their den. For half an hour we stoutly resisted their blandishments and the increasing darkness ; but at last the courier returned with the postmaster, who assured us the horses were in the country and not to be had until the morning. We were, therefore, *malgré nous*, housed in the *best rooms* in the only inn ; and then, and not until then, did we discover the true Croat character, and how nearly a human being may approach in intellect to the condition of a mere animal.

Four men and two barefooted damsels bounced in and out of the rooms, as if they were performing in some Slavonian ballet. One woman alone spoke German out of a vast household. The rest all mercilessly addressed us in a dialect to which any gibberish would sound pure Tuscan in

comparison. We treated them as we would have done Sandwich Islanders, or any other savages, making signs for all we wanted. I only wonder I did not break a blood vessel in laughing at their wondering and unutterably stupid faces. We were assured that we should have a most excellent supper, as the host had, for five-and-twenty years, been *chef* to the Graf at the Castle. In proof of his dexterity, he sent us up some cutlets, swimming in rancid oil, and delicately sprinkled with cinders. We had fortunately some tea with us, it being an unknown beverage in Croatia; and when we asked for a tea-pot, a tiny jug of red clay was brought, containing, perhaps, a quarter of a pint.

Luckily, Giovanni found a tea-pot among the basket of crockery. The host begged most pathetically to be allowed to taste the compound; and when Emily had mixed

him a cup, he told us that when he was cook to the count, he had frequently enjoyed the privilege of tasting this inspiring liquor.

To get something to eat was not difficult, but washing appears to every Croat a work of supererogation. For a long time the landlady protested that she knew of no basins in the house ; but at length produced two pie dishes with great delay, and much difficulty and murmuring.

Croatian doors can rarely boast of any fastening ; but we barricaded ours as well as we could, in the absence of all conveniences for the purpose, and went very tired to bed. At about one o'clock, or half-past, Emily woke me with the pleasing intelligence that some one was forcing an entrance into the outer room, where the much coveted tea and various other things were.

Seizing my pistols, and arming Emily

with a dagger and life-preserver, I opened the door between the rooms, and we entered. Here we found the barricade partially displaced, but all quiet. In about a quarter of an hour the intruder returned, and we did the same, apparently intimidating him, as he again retired. Half an hour more, and the nocturnal marauder made another essay to force open the door. The attempt was this time productive of great clatter; and when, our patience quite exhausted, and I feeling as savage as a tiger, we rushed again into the room, determined, if possible, to catch the sneaking coward in the act, we found the outer door half open. We quickly and quietly removed the barricade, and then suddenly threw open the door wide, and ran out into the passage just in time to see our friend disappearing down the dark labyrinth beyond, and to hear him

quickly shut the door of the distant room in which he had taken refuge.

Not wishing to be delayed on our journey by any judicial inquiry, the next day we left the cowardly fellow in his lair, feeling quite sure he would not venture to return after the fright we had given him, and the unearthly noise we made at the heels of the fugitive. Nor were we wrong in our conjectures; for having renewed the barricade and carried every available article into our inner sanctuary, we were left to undisturbed repose for the few remaining hours of night.

Giovanni was robbed of some trifles the same evening, but soon recovered them by menacing the master of the house with the all-powerful *posada* of the next town. I suspect him personally to have been our unwelcome visitor and the cruel disturber of our much-needed rest. He looked a sneak-

ing cowardly fellow, who would willingly attempt a midnight theft, with the hope of the smallest amount of gain, yet totally deficient of boldness, to insure his success.

We started in the morning, the people silent and looking ashamed. The roads are as good here as in many parts of England. The country hedges, woods, and meadows, were strikingly like some very pretty parts of our own country; but it is not uncommon to find the wildest people in the tamest scenery, and here the people grew stranger and less civilized, as we proceeded.

I remember, when at Venice, waiting one day at the railway station, at Mestri, to start for Padua, seeing beside the lagoon a lad of fifteen, in the exact costume of a Polynesian islander, which had evidently been made expressly for him, and looking the veriest savage that ever quitted the South Seas.

We arrived at Carlstadt by mid-day. The town is a huge³ cattle market, muddy, mean, and disagreeable. There is but one very bad hotel, crowded with officers and soldiers. A man must be either a grazier, or a martinet, to admire Carlstadt. Here a good Samaritan, named Gradinovatch, a shopkeeper and Turkish agent, got hold of our courier, and tried all in his power to induce us to change our route for that of the Danube and Black Sea. Finding this impossible, he painted Bosnia in the most frightful colours ; protested it was in a blaze of insurrection, and that the people had revolted against the Pacha and Governor of Traunik, and had been fighting all the summer. He called in the Judge and the Colonel of the regiment to corroborate his story, which he insisted on hearing substantiated by those officers in person.

We found the said dignitaries sitting on

a bench before a *café*, the Judge smoking a cigar, and looking as unjudicial, and as scampish as any dispenser of the laws need do. They and the bystanders joined vigorously in a chorus of abuse against Bosnia, of declarations of the impossibility of passing through the country, and of recommendations in favour of the Dampfschiffs, Danube, and Black Sea.

I could hardly imagine them *all* shareholders in the Steamboat Company; and began to fancy that Bosnia really must be in a state of insurrection. Gradinovatch next introduced us to a certain Graf N——, a Captain of Austrian cavalry, and a son of old Field Marshal N——. He also assured us that the attempt to penetrate the charmed country was hopeless, and we gave it up. Yet, resisting all the seductions of the Black Sea, and the fascinations of the Siren

Dampfschiff, we adhered to our resolution of going by land.

We found it impossible to start before the next day, and the Graf, with an amiable communicativeness, told me his story. He had served in the Hungarian war, had been wounded by two grape-shot at Neline, had had five horses killed under him, and, in fact, had seen much service. He taught me to pronounce the ineuphonious name of his Ban, (which name, by the bye I saw written over a small grocer's shop, in a Slavonian village), and told me, besides, of his own capture by the Magyars, and his *ruse* escape.

It seems he had carried some despatches to the Ban, which enabled him to fall back on Vienna, and save his army from being crushed by the Hungarian advance. On his return, he was taken by the Magyar

cavalry, and brought before a species of Court Martial, whom he persuaded that he was an Italian, that he had left the army of Italy, with only his horse and his uniform; and that he hated the Austrians, and the Croats, the Ban Jellachich, and above all, Field Marshal N—— his *own* father! who was a short distance off, with the Imperialists. Finally, having persuaded the Magyars that he was an Ausonian Captain Dalgetty, he offered to take service with them. Seeing him to be an officer, and a Captain of horse, to boot—they promised him a regiment of Hussars, and left him unguarded. The military Ulysses then flew to the shed, where his English charger stood, leaped on his back, and grasping the halter, galloped quickly off, without saddle or bridle, hotly but vainly chased by the angry dragoons. He rode southward for ninety English miles, until his horse fell and died, near one

of the outposts of an Austrian *corps d'armée*. Had he been a little later in mounting his horse, his fate would inevitably have been the halter ; for, as he since heard, a few hours after his departure, one Giuseppe, a Magyar Croat, and an enemy of his family, rode into the camp, and revealing his real name, and the motive of his journey, requested he might be hanged. It appears that vendittas exist in Croatia, as well as in Corsica.

We left Carlstadt in a heavy vetturino carriage, and crept slowly along a bad road intersected with curiously deep ruts. This was the more provoking, as from Trieste the roads had been little inferior to some in England. Being market day, the most picturesque groups of peasantry were to be seen, sitting outside the doors of the Gasthofen, while country waggons, and streams of sheep, with very singular horns,

long and spirally twisted, filled the road to Voynich.

The red-capped peasants, from the Turkish frontier, formed the most striking objects in the throng. Their huge pouches, of fringed leather, quaint sandals, wide white trousers, and above all, the long Eastern pistols and daggers in their girdles, suited well with their fierce looks, and bronzed hardy features. The faces of most of these men wore a bold and almost a savage expression, as if their intercourse with the wilder race of the South had given a fire to their blood, totally wanting in the dull Austrian peasant.

Nor were their brass-mounted petronels by any means meant for ornamental purposes, as the little bag of powder hanging from every sash testified. The women wore long white veils, flowing over their shoulders; and one we saw with her head covered with

a glittering net of golden coins,—her fortune doubtless. Red-capped children greeted us with the oriental salaam as we passed, and soon after, a still more Turkish salute was paid to us.

As a light waggon passed us at full speed, a borderer stood up, drew his heavy horse-pistols and deliberately fired both over our heads. Poverty-stricken and miserable as were the road-side huts, we saw several stalls on which were displayed scarlet caps, most splendidly embroidered in gold and silver. No one can tell who bought them. I scarcely believe a man in the country could have scraped together zuansigers enough to have bought the shabbiest.

We found the town at Voynich half filled with soldiers, and the village swarming with grey paletots and bayonets. Basins are exotics in Croatia, and it is very hard even to get a pie-dish as a substitute. At

Voynich they began to lay a cover for our courier at dinner, a piece of socialism which was persisted in throughout the east of Croatia and Slavonia.

Many of the women here wear their hair in pig-tails, as long and as carefully plaited as any in the celestial empire. The Chinese certainly have the good taste to omit the greasy eel-skins of the Slave damsels.

The whole road from Carlstadt to Sysek is under military control, of which fact I had a tolerably convincing proof. I had walked out before breakfast along the cross-road leading to Turkey, and was hurrying up a gentle eminence, in hopes of getting a view of the *taboo* province of Bosnia, when, long ere I reached the summit of the mound, from whence I trusted to survey the promised land, a hoarse shout from a couple of Austrian officers arrested my steps. I had observed the amiable gentlemen scowling

sulkily as I passed them, and as they now approached, I turned and informed them that my German was on the half-pay establishment. The captain was ignorant of any language but his own, the lieutenant only spoke Italian ; but I contrived to make him understand, in answer to his imperious demand for my passport, that he should see it if he would walk five hundred yards or so to the inn, and that I was an Englishman, and not a Turkish spy, as he seemed to imagine.

Nothing would satisfy the military Dogberry, however, and he poured forth question after question in that peculiarly vexatious manner, that none but a foreign policeman can emulate, until my stock of patience and my Tuscan began equally to fail. How long I should have endured the fellow's impertinence I know not, nor what might have been the consequence of losing my temper ;

but, happily, we reached the inn, where the sight of the signatures of the Austrian Ambassador and Consuls freed me from the clutches of my worthy companions, whose first care, on reaching the hostelry, had been to call a wild Croat soldier to mount guard over me.

An army whose officers disgrace their epaulettes, by playing the part of amateur constables on the highroads, ceases to deserve the name, and becomes a rabble of cut-throats.

There was a Turkish merchant at Voynich returning into Bosnia, on his little spirited mountain horse, shaggy and trapped over with red housings. This man's bold bronzed face, and sash filled with glittering arms, bright and serviceable, made rather a striking contrast to the equipment of an English bagman. He had done his trafficking in a Christian land, and with his bag of piastres

and ducats at his girdle, was about to ride fearlessly over the Ottoman frontier, to cross the blue mountains of Bosnia, and wade the dangerous fords of the deep Unna. Trusting to the Prophet's aid, and to the edge of his Koran-lettered yataghan, this turbaned shopkeeper was simply and tranquilly returning to his home at Bihach, Gliouch, savage Glamotab, or even the distant Trawnik. Vainly did rough hills, and wild torrents, and men wilder and ruder still, essay to bar the way to this Osmanlee trader.

In Bulgaria I learned from some intelligent Turkish officers of rank the true character of Bosnia and its people. The Bosnians apostatized, some two centuries ago, to retain their lands, and are mostly now fanatical Mussulmen, though of the Slave race, and but thinly mixed with the genuine Tartar blood. The people of the

south part of the province, touching on Albania, are mostly of the Arnaut stock. The soil is bad, provisions dear, the houses but sheds of straw, and the people ignorant and savage, though somewhat picturesque robbers, in red trousers and tasseled caps. Eggs and black bread are almost the sole provisions to be found in Bosnia, and the keep of a horse comes to eighty piastres a month, while in Bulgaria it costs only thirty.

CHAPTER II.

TRAWNIK is described as a cluster of mud huts, and the semi-republican and intensely Turkish garrison town of Bosna Serail, where no Pacha is ever admitted, is the only city of any pretensions. To hear both Turk and Christian, Croat and Slave, speak of this sterile province, you would deem it an accursed land, and its sons a set of outcast Pariahs; yet the most intelligent servant I saw in the East was a Bosnian, the Kavass Bashee of the English Consul at Belgrade; and the noblest and

most superb figure I ever saw, was that of a Bosnian robber or rebel.

We left Voynich in a rickety kind of old wheel-barrow, drawn by two bad horses, and with a little dirty straw, by way of a cushion; poor Giovanni piteously murmuring, that in Italy, even the prisoners were allowed comfortable carts and clean straw, but that here no such luxuries were to be obtained, even by Forestieri, who could pay for them.

The bridge, near the village, was a fine specimen of primeval architecture: a number of narrow loose planks had been laid across the torrent, so that at every step which the horses took, the cart bounded as if on spring boards. Nor was this all; for there were sundry very ugly chasms to be half-jumped half-tumbled over, and no parapet to prevent a swerve of the horses bearing the whole party into the rushing water. Most

bridges in the Danubian provinces resemble this.

At the lonely post-house of Vosternamost we had a peep at a true scene of savage life. The house was built of blocks and rough logs, thatched, and supported by wooden buttresses. The interior consisted of one huge room, or rather loft, reached by a ladder, and inhabited by five-and-twenty or thirty people, and a swarm of poultry in baskets. Abundance of cats were there, and a gipsey fire burned in the centre of the earthen floor, round which were squatted many of the inmates, without any reluctance inhaling the smoke, which, unprovided with a chimney, was left unchecked to find its own way out of the cabin.

The people here were indescribably wild and untutored. We had to change carts at every post-house ; and here the old woman

refused us any straw, and reduced Giovanni to the painful necessity of stealing some; and when we offered four florins for a piece of straw matting worth sixpence, as a covering and shelter against the heat of the sun, we were obligingly told that we must go to Agram if we wished to find such sybaritical comforts.

There was a girl here, of some eighteen or twenty years of age, a most admirable specimen of savage beauty, as far as large black eyes, red lips, glossy braids of jet, white cannibalish teeth, so glittering that it almost made one shudder to look at them, combined with the air and step of an Indian queen, could realize the picture.

She wore a shawl cincture over her white petticoat, in form like the *rat* of the Nubian girls, fringed, and richly embroidered with gold thread. She was evidently the belle of the place, and moved with an untaught,

barbarous grace, which plainly bespoke her knowledge of the distinction.

They keep the horses in pairs, literally handcuffed, or, perhaps, to speak more correctly, hobbled or *foot-cuffed* together, and looking very like so many equine malefactors.

A turnkey in sandals having liberated two of these unhappy quadruped *forçats* from their hempen manacles, we rattled away from Vosternamost, with our umbrellas up, as some defence against the fierce rays of the blazing sun. Near here we saw a village of huts or wigwams, on the side of a hill, looking like tilted waggons. The landscape was excessively English, but the armed peasantry and loaded horses changed the effect a little. We dined at Glina, and at Petrina appropriated the horses and carriage of the post commissary, which functionary was a trifle behind his time,

leaving people convulsed with laughter at our impudence.

At Sysek everybody exerted themselves to the utmost to send us by the steam-boat. The landlord, an accomplished blackguard, offered us the choice of waiting four days for the Saam steamer, or taking his Vetturino horses, with which, for some hundreds of florins, he proposed, in ten days, to carry us to Semlin. Every one, even the postmaster himself, threw difficulties in the way of our having post-horses, and assured us we should find no horses, roads, food, carts, or doctors, on the road to Semlin; and that, at any rate, it would take twelve days, and vast amounts of florins, to reach it; that the road was full of robbers, and that we should, moreover, infallibly catch the marsh-fever, and die in twenty-four hours. All this our courier fully credited, and

retailed to us in the most dismal and lugubrious tone that ever human raven croaked in. We lost a day; but we secured the horses, by going ourselves to the post-house, where Emily's German, and my passport, converted the bear into a lamb. We tried to hire a cart for the whole journey, to save time in changing at the post-houses; but the man asked, besides twenty-five florins for the hire, forty more as a deposit for the use of a peculiarly unsafe, open clothes' basket upon wheels, which we therefore declined; and next endeavoured to purchase a small covered waggon. The price asked was a hundred florins, the real value being about thirty. A broken down old cart was next offered to us at eighty, and I gave up the bargain in disgust.

In the town of Koustanz, on the river, the people crowded round to shake hands, and ask our nation; the announcement that

we were English was received with wild shouts. We entered on a long stage of marshy ground, and should soon have been benighted, had it not been for the flitting light of the treacherous *feu follet*, and the pale bright flash of the glittering fire-fly.

The road was bad and swampy, the bridges frequent, the driver stupidly sulky, and our progress, of course, very slow. Suddenly we observed a figure in white step from the bushes by the river, and pursue our track. By the dim and fitful light I could just distinguish that it was that of a Turk of powerful frame. He came nearer.

His face, shadowed by his white turban, I could not see; but his stately height and exquisite symmetry would have attracted attention anywhere. Every motion spoke of strength, courage, and innate grace; while the free play of his limbs, the noble carriage

of his head, and his proud air, gave him the complete look of a haughty savage chief in an enemy's country. Those who have read "*Zohrab*" may alone imagine him.

His arms were gracefully folded on his breast, so as half to hide the weapons which glimmered in his sash; and he followed us with the stealthy, noiseless step of the tiger, running when we trotted, creeping among the bushes at other times, concealing his figure behind the trees as much as his white dress would allow, and then bounding after us swiftly and silently. Our driver looked back once, and seemed satisfied.

The Turk drew nearer, his arms still folded. In vain I tried to get a glimpse of his features; but although they were concealed, there was a strange fascination even in the man's form and bearing alone which I cannot easily forget. I never saw any

one who looked so thoroughly kingly, and I am certain that I should always recognize him in any crowd.

He came still nearer. The back of the cart was open, and I longed to spring out; but our friend had done nothing to justify an assault on my part, and I contented myself with noiselessly and quietly drawing my sabre, to avoid the rattling of the steel, and waited. He came nearer, and I thought how easily he might have fired into the cart without much danger to himself. Suddenly, with his hand on his arms, he advanced up to the cart, and coolly counted our numbers, as if measuring his single strength with ours, which was nothing particular.

Giovanni being the most unwarlike of mankind, I drew out a pistol, and cocked it; the click of the lock sounded clear and distinct on my ear, with a kind of nervous

agony, a sense of pain, such as one might feel at seeing a noble stag about to fall beneath the shot of an expert marksman. To kill that stately, noble-looking savage seemed like slaying the tiger in his royal beauty.

There was something so princely in his air, that one could not treat him as a common wolfish beast of prey. Once I thought he grasped the butt of his Turkish pistol. The barrel of mine gleamed in the fitful light. Three steps nearer—my finger was on the trigger; another—and the next minute would have cost the life of one at least, when the will-o'the-wisp's light flashed full upon the cart, showing the steel hilt of my sabre and the barrel of my ready weapon. The haughty savage fell back, and entered the clump of trees that lined the river; and I fancied I heard the splash of oars, which bore him to the

Turkish shore. It was eleven before we reached the village, where the inhabitants were all in bed, and would not be induced to get up on any terms.

30 We drove first to the post-house, where we knocked up the postmaster, and ordered horses for the morning. It being necessary to turn, our driver lifted up the back of the cart, and lifted it round by sheer strength—a plan which he followed several times that night, and which is very popular in Croatia.

32 We knocked at all the ale-houses in the village; but one and all refused to listen to our postboy's shouts of "Veer das," and our own prayers and supplications for admittance.

Some people did open their windows to curse us for waking them; others were silent; but all kept their doors shut; and never were casual paupers more roughly

rebuffed from the doors of workhouses than were we from any place of rest. We were the outcast Pariahs of the village ; and had we had the plague, yellow fever, and leprosy united, we could not have been more unceremoniously rejected.

The postboy grew sulky—we despaired. What was to be done? Were we, in a country of robbers, to sleep in a cart in the street? No shed, no outhouse could be found. How welcome had been a barn, with dry, clean straw! At last our postboy grew mutinous, and galloped off to the post-house. There we again summoned the growling, sleepy, and half-clad postmaster, and Emily's purest German requested shelter for the night. It was gruffly refused.

“Then give us horses immediately for Jasyenovasz.”

“Man travels not by night,” was the surly reply.

We tried again. No; the horses were turned out to graze. We offered double payment, but were still refused. There was a deep river; the bridge was broken, the ford was dangerous, and who was to pay if his horses were drowned?

Then, as a last resource, we asked, would he himself take us in for the night? Again were we refused, and told to go away. But where, we asked, were we to go to? A question which evidently seemed to puzzle him; but he could not, he said, give us a room, as they were all filled with children.

By this time, however, we had made good our entrance, and even succeeded in walking up-stairs. This, and a last despairing appeal that we might be permitted to sleep in the kitchen, at length induced the man to go and consult with his wife upon the possibility of admitting us; we, in the

mean time, resolving that nothing but force should remove us. Nor would this have been wanting; for we had seen in the streets four brigand-looking fellows, in grey coats, wide white trousers, and caps, and armed with long guns; and these, we were told, were the frontier police patrol.

At last the worthy pair consented to give us house-room for the night; and, in fact, once roused to Samaritanism, the good folks grew marvellously civil, and provided us with a comfortable sofa, plenty of eggs, bread, and hot water. Tea we always carried with us.

We fell asleep, with a sense of luxury, enhanced by excess of fatigue and vexation.

The next morning we started early. Our now mollified host gave us much useful information respecting the roads, and warned us of robbers near Ruma, while he assured us that the only way to secure

horses was to take out our passports, and threaten the postmasters. We rolled off, under a broiling sun, with the great black and purple Turkish Mountains of the Forbidden, the enchanted Bosnia, the land of giants, looming on our right. Near here we saw the first stork swooping heavily through the air. They grew common afterwards. The genii had repaired the broken bridge in the night, and clever workmen they must have been; for it was a stately structure when we passed over it; and even the perilous ford was shorn of its terrors by the presence of a ferry-boat, with a man in an Albanian dress for a Charon. Having crossed the Styx, we entered Jasyenovasz, quitted the Bannat of Croatia, and were soon in Slavonia.

We stopped at an inn, about eleven o'clock, to breakfast, and were uncere- moniously told that it was too late to have

any; nor did any one offer to show us a room, and we were, therefore, obliged to seek one for ourselves.

Down-stairs, all were locked; but upstairs we were more fortunate, and at length took possession of the bed-room belonging to the landlord's daughter; while Giovanni found us some eggs and milk. The fair owner of the apartment appeared noways disconcerted by our appropriation, but calmly, as if we had not been there, proceeded to habit herself in costly array, and soon after went away in state.

The roads in this part of the country are only very muddy causeways, leading through wet and dreary marshes. The endless police stations are built on pillars of wood, and having no ground-floor, present the appearance of mushrooms upon stilts; and most of the other houses are of the same peculiar form.

The country is one huge swamp, through which the horses jingle, with their one tinkling bell hung round their necks; while huge Indian-looking canoes, or periaquias, swarm on the lagoons.

These boats are simply scooped out of the trunks of large trees, and having but little form or symmetry, are most primitive-looking concerns. The wells of the country are of great depth, and the bucket is lifted by means of a ponderous lever, made of the trunk of some gigantic tree, to one end of which is suspended the bucket, the other being weighed down by one or many heavy logs. These quaint-looking windlasses we afterwards found were very common in Turkey.

The metal minaret-looking spires of the New Gradisca have a very striking effect, and give an arabesque air to the town, one of the prettiest I ever saw for its size and

situation. The fair white houses and glittering spires looked singularly cheerful, after the mud huts of Jasyenovasz and other villages on the road.

Slavonia is a rich tame country, highly cultivated, and very different from the wild Croatia with its savage race. Great corn fields cover the land, while here and there you see the sacred stork, seated on her unmolested nest, fearless of the face of man. Yet the people's wants are few and simple, and no wealth would keep an alderman from starving. We sometimes found no food but eggs and black bread, after a journey of fifteen hours. The people are as inquisitive as Yankees.

At Oriovaez the Kolverinn was a Magyar girl of twenty, who praised the Hungarians and Bosnians, and abused the Slaves. She had just lost her husband, who had been serving with the army in Italy, and she

proudly boasted to Emily, "Though your husband looks young, mine, I assure you, was younger."

In Slavonia it is usual to tack the upper sheet round a coloured quilt, and in the best inns it is customary to change the linen once in three weeks, no matter who had slept in it.

At Oriovaez sitting-rooms were unheard of, and I was assured no native of Britain had ever been seen there but two English Jews! The land here is as flat as a billiard-table, and the roads swarm with carts. I verily believe no Slavonian ever walks, or even drives less than two horses in his little waggon. The white coifed women alone stalk about, wearing as aprons fringed rugs made of shaggy wool.

The fair sex bathe in deep ponds by the roadside as composedly as if they were on the Ramsgate or Brighton sands, the sole

difference between the bathers being in their dress, about which my Slavonian friends did not appear in any way particular.

At Nugesbrod we tried hard to get permission to cross the river and enter Bosnia for a few hours' excursion ; but vainly did Giovanni walk from castle to fortress, from magistrate to officer, from commissary to catchpole, with the passports. The answer was always that it was impossible, that they dare not go themselves, and that the patrol on the river's bank would stop any officer even who might attempt to embark for Turkey.

We persevered until the colonel came himself to our rooms, and with the most obsequious civility and cringing politeness, regretted that his orders were imperative to let no one pass. Reasons were asked for this trifling disregard of the law of

nations, but reason, we were assured, had nothing to do with the Austrian government, and I implicitly credit the fact. We ordered horses, finished our dinner, and left Nugesbrod.

Further on we passed through a village fête, where all the men were dressed in white petticoats and frilled trousers. The women, besides their ordinary dress, wore very handsome ruffles round their sleeves. Gold was actually refused at an inn near here. It really is almost worth a journey to Slavonia to see the mighty metal monarch of the civilized world looked upon with suspicion, and rejected as the vilest dross.

An alchemist would starve in the Danubian provinces. He might transmute tin and copper into gold and silver, but he never could turn the precious metals into paper, which is the only acceptable money

you can offer. Dirty ten kreutzer notes are what a Slavonian Midas would have changed all he touched into. Truly, that country can never be long bankrupt, which prefers to trust the flimsy notes of an insolvent government to the metal of the mine.

In a large pool by the roadside we saw a family party fishing with a drag-net, and comprehending father, mother, two sons and a daughter, the greater part being in costumes of a simplicity worthy only of Eden before the fall. The long hair of the peasantry from Nugesbrod to Ruma is very remarkable, and gives the men a peculiar ferocity of aspect.

The inns are in general small and clean; but one I remember perfectly well for its incredible swarms of fleas, of amazing and savage voracity. The beds were quite out of the question, and we slept on a row of

hard wooden chairs, with our carpet bags—poor substitute for down pillows. But even here myriads of palga followed us, and the martyrdom we suffered was such, that, accustomed as I have since been to the usual Turkish nights' entertainments, I look back to the voracity of the fleas of that village as to some marvellous and unprecedented exploit in the annals of the blood-sucking world. Add to the rapacity of these countless devourers the buzz of the viewless but keen lanceted mosquito, the invisible surgeon of the air, and you may get a clear idea of our sufferings.

On we rattled in the clumsy springless charettes, over the immensely wide roads, with one narrow track winding along them, tolerably smooth and serviceable, the rest of the broad expanse called a highway being totally useless, and resembling nothing but a wet ploughed field. Here, at any rate,

the only thieves to be apprehended were the Gitanos, or gypsies of the country, as the danger of Bosnian marauders from the Turkish bank had ceased.

By the bye, soon after we lost sight of the respectable person of Mussulman persuasion, who followed us between Koustanz and Jasyenovasz, I remember a voice shouted out something from the bushes by the river's side, to which our Slavonian driver answered by the one word "Glamoteh," and the invisible questioner forthwith held his peace. Now, Glamoteh is the name of a small town in the west of Bosnia, between Trawnik and Basa-Serai, of which it is very probable our white-turbaned friend might have been a native. At any rate, the word was used as a counter-sign, and a very suspicious one, inasmuch as it argues a very good understanding secretly kept up between the

people on the Austrian and Turkish banks of the river for some concealed purpose. Austria may find my worthy acquaintance and his Glamoteh a firebrand on her southern frontier some fine night ere long.

At Csalma I was partly amused and partly disgusted by a quarrel between two postillions. I thought it was about Cognac, but it seems "Cognee" is the Slave for a horse, which was the subject in dispute. They tore each other's hair, they rolled on the ground, kicking and biting, and scratching each other like men possessed of demons. They howled and screamed shrilly, in their odious patois jargon, and gabbled with such frightful volubility, that they seemed fit candidates for Bedlam.

The men and women within hearing all thought it necessary to rave and gabble in chorus, and one might have deemed it the saturnalia of madness. But at last the

duel was finished, and one of the combatants, a tall powerful man, with hair down to his shoulders, and a face which a painter would have chosen for Cain, got up from the ground, and weeping bitterly, mounted his gig, in which he rattled out of the yard and drove off. The other, a very short German, with hair to match in length, drove us to the end of our day's journey with great steadiness, and the most calm and sober civility.

The questions of the postmasters and others are astonishingly blunt and simple. —“Are you a courier, or what are you?” one man asked me, with perfect composure.

The sheep with their curious spirally-twisted broad horns, and the woolly dogs that guard them, so like the gentle creatures they protect, as even to deceive a wolf; but of such great size and strength that he would infallibly catch a Tartar, were he to presume

on his mistake,—are the most remarkable objects in the country.

Near Ruma the people insisted that we were Russians, to which we gravely assented. There was a clear blue sky as we left Ruma, with peculiarly still, thick, white, heavy clouds, listless and immoveable, such as we never see in England.—A very tropical sky indeed it was, and looked scorchingly hot. The road wound through immeasurable fields of bright gaudy flowers—a wide plain enamelled with waving azure leaves and green stems. At Golubinitz the postmaster told us, that only about three travellers passed annually. No wonder we found such difficulty in obtaining horses on the road.

At length from a steep hill we caught sight at once of Semlin—of the broad and noble river, and of the Ottoman fortress and Servian city of Belgrade, on the opposite bank.

On our arrival at the hotel, in spite of a pelting shower, I instantly quitted our newly-found shelter, and walked to the water's edge.

Behind me lay the dirty, ill-paved, jingling streets of Semlin ; before me, basking in the sun, which shone only on the favoured side of the water, were the snowy and lofty minarets—the rock-planted castle—the flashing walls of white Belgrade. It was the first Turkish—the first Oriental city I had ever seen, and I could hardly tear myself away from the prospect.

The Commissary of the River refused to let us pass that night. We heard that the worthy gentleman was by no means averse to, or above, the temptation of a bribe, and in consequence sent to offer him a few florins, to expedite the boat's departure ; but the honest official coolly answered, that it was now too late, but had the offer been made

an hour sooner, it would have been promptly and with pleasure accepted.

The *kellnerin* of the hotel was a sentimental German, who kissed Emily's hands on wishing her good-night; brought a bunch of flowers to her bedside in the morning, and assured us that she had never seen a French or an English lady before.

The next morning we took a large boat with four rowers; had our luggage searched before leaving Austria; pulled from under the shadow of the Semlin roofs, and steered for the Turkish city, bidding adieu to the West with light hearts and cheerful countenances.

Not so poor Giovanni. He sat in the boat drawn up into the smallest possible compass, his head leaning on his hand, his looks half averted from the Austrian shores *we* were quitting so gaily, and his face red and frightened. He seemed not pale, but scarlet

with fear, while remorse was strongly marked on his features, and he looked altogether like a burlesque picture of a criminal going by water to execution.

Passing an island of mud with a cheerful population of crows, we next skirted a line of Chinese-looking junks, and saw some fine fish, of twelve or fifteen pounds a-piece;—salmon I imagine,—fast hooked on lines hanging from their sides.

The fortress looked calm and hot, perfectly dead, and most unhealthy;—and the white town glittering beneath the bright, scorching, glowing sky, with mud and water around, and the fierce sun glaring above, looked just the spot which the plague would choose for the scene of its blasting reign. But the viewless hand was not stretched forth over Belgrade.

The dreadful angel, Azrael, the scourge and curse of the Ottoman empire, has stayed:

his once unsparing scythe, and strikes not now, as formerly, thousands in a day. But the sword of the pestilence still hangs over Turkey. The fiery blade of her destroyer yet gleams in her cloudless sky, and none can say when or where the doomed thunderbolt of the awful pest may fall on the devoted sand.

When we came nearer the shore, a bustle took place, and a Douanier, *en blouse*, with a number of porters, advanced. I had "Eothen" in my carpet bag, and had been reading the author's description of his entry into Belgrade, and of the splendid arms of the porters. But the weapons of these gentry have faded away in brilliancy since that time, or else they could only have existed in the author's most fertile imagination; for of those that graced the belts and sashes of the very shabby and ragged fellows on the landing-place, the

utmost my eyes could discern on each, was a single brass-mounted pistol, old, worn, and rusty, with a battered yataghan, or greasy handjar.

Every one wears a dagger, which serves as dinner or pocket-knife, and razor too, may be. It has generally a hilt of bone or ivory, with rings of variegated colours, and swings from the sash, suspended by a leathern thong. Thus it may serve on occasions as knife or dagger.

Some of these men were Turks, some Servian Christians, but all were poorly and meanly dressed, and did not assume any of the proud and farouche air proper to good Mussulmen in the presence of an Infidel. They loaded each other with our luggage, which, after much dispute, was finally settled on the shoulders of a small, dark, swarthy-featured Turk, and a taller and stouter Greek.

The light baggage of umbrellas and cloaks fell to Giovanni's care; my heavy sabre and swordstick to mine. Off we went, then, to the passport office, after a brief search of bags, and then started on a very hot walk, up some steep hilly streets, to the English Consulate, whither, for reasons of their own, the porters insisted on proceeding.

After toiling along the most badly paved of lanes, under a broiling sun, to which Satan's address would have been well bestowed, we gained the house, where flew, in pride of power, the flag of England. Entering the consul's residence, breathless, heated, and dusty, we hastily followed a man of imposing height, and intelligent appearance, dressed in a short full white petticoat, greatly resembling the Highlander's kilt; with greaves, jacket, and cincture, wherein were displayed, and most tastily arranged, handsome pistols, dirks, and other instruments of

bloodshed; and soon stood before the representative of our country. We were received by the consul with the kindest and most polished courtesy, and with a hospitality which shewed that an English gentleman, like Macassar oil, is warranted to keep perfect in every clime.

We heard from him at dinner that there was a rebellion of Rayahs in Bulgaria, in the Pachalik of Nissa, which we should have to pass. A Swiss gentleman was present, who had travelled by that route. He fully believed the fatigues and hardships would prove too much for us; and when the consul said he believed the Nissian rebels to be nearly quelled, replied with a bland smile and incredulous expression, "*Croyez vous qu'ils sont domptés?*" in a tone which Liston could not have equalled.

The consul found us a Tartar, a fine specimen of his tribe; a giant in size and

strength, with a most showy and powerful person, heavy, yet not ungraceful ; with a dark, grim, swarthy face, whose dusty lineaments expressed a ferocious sort of good humor. Iovon, the Servian Tartar, was the beau ideal of his roving and nomadic caste. I never shall forget his appearance, nor his strange air of fierce docility, as he first stood before us, silent and motionless, his heavy brow bent, his stately form bowed, and his massive arms hanging down on each side of his vast chest, waiting patiently for orders, in a manner that reminded me of the unmurmuring and tranquil obedience of the mighty elephant.

He was a true Oriental in character ; but though resembling the Turks in appearance, he was, in fact, a Christian of the Greek Church, reasonably devout, and no lover of the Moslemah. His age might have been

forty. I took a fancy to the man the first day we had him.

We had made some rather heavy purchases in the town. A hamal or porter had brought them in, and as porters in all countries do, grumbled excessively on being paid his proper fee. He was a tall powerful man, with his handjar in his girdle, but Iovon happening to be in the room, took him by the shoulder and pushed him along the passage and down the stairs like a child; and then returned smiling to us for applause, his white teeth glittering like a lion's under his coal-black moustache.

CHAPTER III.

IN walking through the town, we began greatly to distrust all we had heard of the phlegm and want of curiosity of the eastern nations when Europeans come among them. Never were two owls in the daylight more mobbed and worried by small birds ; never were hawks more relentlessly chased across the sky by flocks of unwarlike sparrows, than we were harassed and tormented wherever we turned our steps. The Frank quarter,—the Greek quarter,—the Turkish quarter,—the Jew quarter. All, all poured

forth their swarms of yelling children, giggling women, and staring men.

The reports of our intended journey had circulated rapidly from Carlstadt along the frontier, and reached Belgrade before our arrival, and as Emily was the first English lady who had ever attempted to perform the journey on horseback, or, as I believe, ever dreamed of it at all, we became the recognized and legitimate lions of Belgrade.

We happened, when strolling through the city, to see some red saddles of the genuine Tartar form, hanging at a shop door. We asked the price:—"Sixty zwansigers a-piece," responded the unblushing saddler, at which the bystanders laughed loudly, and we left the place without stopping to bargain. The Tartar had his own saddle, and contrived to borrow another—both European. We wanted two more, but European saddles were hard to find. Ere long Iovon

entered with a heap of cushions, bridles, shovel-stirrups, white girths, and a couple of red leather saddles, bound with blue, being the identical saddles we had before seen, and accompanied by their owner, the same saddler at whose shop we had first seen them.

I once more asked the price of the saddles. They had fallen in value. Iovon bought them for fourteen zwansigers each, with stirrups and girths complete; and the Mameluke bridles were thrown in for a few more Austrian siras.

We hired a dragoman during our stay in the town, a Spanish Jew named Alessandro, certainly the best and most disinterested of his nation I ever heard of. He made better bargains for us than many Christians would have done; gave us a great deal of useful advice about what, in that fatal and deadly climate, we ought to "eat, drink, and avoid,"

and gave me a curious old handjar, with stained ivory hilt, and purple blade; while, marvel of marvels! Jew as he was, he was perfectly contented with the gratuity I gave him. In fact, he scarcely looked at it.

By his advice we laid in a small store of lemons and oranges, things unattainable on the road, and doubly precious, as the wine of the country is sour, and pure cold water reckoned unwholesome. Spirits, both brandy and rakee, every one cautions the traveller against; though the Servians and Greeks are habitual dram drinkers. Tea we had, and coffee too, as Turkish coffee always is, black, muddy, and bad; but, alas, Giovanni, one day, in the plentitude of his wisdom, threw ours away. Tobacco matrasses, a chibouque, with amber mouth-piece, cherry-wood stick, and red clay bowl; a Turkish yataghan with its hilt of carved ivory, studded with

red stones in their gilt setting, and on the azure of whose broad, carved, dark-blue blade, were letters from the Koran; holsters, crimson caps, a huge shawl girdle, a tin basin like a broad-brimmed hat with a low crown; a tin cup and two glass bowls formed our chief purchases.

We were very particular in only having a load for one baggage-horse; yet, besides the above-mentioned, we contrived to carry sugar, wax candles, and several other little indispensables for a campaign in Turkey.

The posts were all written down for us, and I had my umbrellas, heavy sabre, and sword-stick, all tied together. One could not well ride under the broiling sun with a massive scabbard of hot steel clanging against one's stirrup. Determined not to trust to the sharp angle of an eastern shovel, I had a pair of good English spurs, and I soon found that the Tartar Iovon had been

equally provident. A cap and red sash made Giovanni's childish, though tricky mind perfectly happy for the time present, and all looked forward with glee to the anticipated start.

The weather was intensely hot, and the scorching sun and glaring, cloudless sky looked like a blazing furnace, or a canopy of heated copper. There was a metallic heat that parched the very air, and fevered the blood. (Emily was very far from well, and I began to fear the ride would be too much for her.) The consul proposed to present me to the Pacha, and we accordingly proceeded to the castle.

At the gate of the fortress the soldiers on guard were lounging about ; under arms indeed, but thrown into the most careless attitudes. We reached the palace itself, where, after a few words exchanged with one of the numerous attendants who were

idling about the spacious ante-chambers and lofty corridors, we advanced into an inner room, where stood Vlasuf Pacha. This said Vlasuf Pacha, the Governor of Belgrade, a man popular with Turks and Christians, equally a friend to the Franks, and a trusty pillar of the Ottoman empire, was a Pacha of the highest rank,—the three-tailed Bashaw of the ancients. He was a Field Marshal in the Turkish army, and receives now 8000*l.* a-year from the Sultan, and is immensely rich, besides having married the daughter of a celebrated and wealthy Pacha of Widdin, and being himself an Asiatic Turk of high degree, and, I believe, a native of the purely Osmanlee province of Anatolia.

His post was a high one, in which also a thoroughly trustworthy governor was necessary, as well as a man who could act with becoming firmness; as the Servians

occasionally refuse to pay their annual tribute to the Porte; yet the life is an idle one, and what is worse to a child of Othman, Mussulman, society is rare there. The Pacha was a short, broad-made man, with a heavy figure, a dark complexion, grey or grizzled beard, and a face, good-humoured, save the grey and glancing eyes, which seemed as if the fire's fierceness of the true Osmanlee only slept within him.

His dress consisted of a white damask dressing-gown, with loose sleeves and open breast, a vest of flowered silk drawn tight across the chest, and fitted with close sleeves; wide white Turkish trowsers, strapped down over French boots; a black stock, and stand-up collar, and a dark crimson cap, with a long full black tassel. His hands, I noticed, were like those of most Turks, very broad, large, and powerful.

He received us with great courtesy and kindness, shook hands with the consul,

bowed to me with his hand on his heart, and led the way to the great audience chamber. This was a large circular room, lofty and ancient, with a chandelier of several branches, bedecked with hanging lustres, suspended from the ceiling.

The floor was boarded only, all save a narrow slip of carpet that skirted the divan, which, of semi-circular form, ran half round the room.

There were two or three arm-chairs, and a little table, huddled up in one corner of the chamber, looking very much as if they had no business there, and knew it very well.

These were the only articles of furniture, with the exception of a most splendid snake-tubed narghilly, which, with its magnificent cut glass, rose-water vase, and its precious mouth-piece leant against the wall.

I am told that the Turks give occasionally

as much as 50%. for a handsome mouth-piece.

One end of the room was pierced with countless windows, from which I caught a glorious view of the noble river, and the bustling panorama of the busy city below.

Vlasuf Pacha took his place on the pile of embroidered divan cushions near one of the windows, and by signs invited us to be seated. Then, laying his hand on his heart, he bowed profoundly, and bade us welcome in the Turkish language. His Highness clapped his hands, and half-a-dozen red-capped attendants entered, as if by magic.

The interpreter was demanded, but alas he was not to be found.

The Pacha apologized, and we waited; but the conversation flagged a little. Ten minutes more, and no interpreter. His Highness again struck his hands lightly

together, and addressed some words to the crimson-turbaned servants. Touching their eyes and breasts, they retired; and soon after, one of them brought in a tray of sweetmeats and iced sherbets.

In five minutes, two pipe-bearers entered bringing a long chibouques, which, with bended knee, they gracefully presented to the consul and myself, placing the carved bowl in a small brass stand. A piece of some aromatic wood burning steadily, kept the pipes constantly lighted; and as I applied the costly mouth-piece to my lips, the delicious fragrance of the Sheraz tobacco streamed upwards in its soft luxurious clouds.

One should visit the East to understand the true charm, the necessity of smoking. Robbed of his tobacco, the indolent and illiterate Oriental would sink under the attacks of ennui; but give him his loved

chibouque, or his cherished, his idolized narghilly, and he bids defiance to the blue devils, and drowns care, with every fresh puff of the "fragrant" weed." If an Osmanlee were commanded to give up the Koran, or his pipe, I think he would have a hard struggle between devotion and habit. Any lesser matter, such as a houri or two, he would resign, for a single whiff.

Many a time, after a hard day's riding beneath an eastern sky, burned half black with the sun, tired, thirsty, and exhausted, on arriving at some wretched hut, where scarcely water and black bread were to be found, with perhaps an egg or two, I have lighted my chibouque, and in five minutes been calm and resigned, even passively happy. The nerves require tobacco to quiet them in the Levant.

The Pacha's own pipe was brought soon after, and then three Moslemites brought

three tiny acorn cups, of Turkish coffee, the juice of the brown berry of Mocha, boiling hot, and without cream or sugar. Moreover, each grim Ganymede stood sentinel over his victim, while he swallowed the burning liquid, which greatly resembled a draught of fire, and blistered one's mouth abominably. But at last we finished our task, and gave back the cups to their bearers, who, carefully covering them with their hands, backed out.

Just then my pipe went out, and his Highness observing it, called a page, sent me his own chibouque, and took mine, with a fresh coal in it. I knew the Pacha meant this as a mark of attention, but I did not know until afterwards what a very high compliment he had paid me, according to the customs and usages of the East.

The interpreter not being forthcoming, we still went on, silently smoking and wait-

ing. I amused myself with looking round the old audience chamber, and thinking what barbarous and relentless sentences, what deeds of blood and horror, the ancient walls of that palace chamber must have witnessed. Here, perhaps, was Czerny George, the heroic Servian Prince, with many a patriot warrior, condemned to the block. The Pacha thought of these things no more than Gallio. Seated on his deep-cushioned divan, with one leg carelessly doubled up under him, an ambrosial cloud of smoke issuing from his huge amber mouth-piece, he quietly contemplated me as an Englishman might a picture.

My hands, in especial, seemed to attract his attention, and he was perpetually comparing them with his own. Once he pointed to the window, and praised the prospect, and at last our quaker's meeting was terminated by the consul's rising. The Pacha

walked with us across two rooms,—a wonderful thing for a Turk of rank to do,—then again bowed with his hand on his heart, and we retired through the corridors, thronged with attendants and guards, and left the palace.

Cold water is not a beverage generally recommended as wholesome to the traveller in Turkey. Every one advises the admixture of sherbet, lemon-juice, or the red wine of the country, which is so villainously bad that I frequently have been doubtful which jug contained the vinegar-intended for the salad, and which the wine. Had the law of the Koran been delivered here, there would have been little need of Mahomet's prohibitory precepts in respect to the bibulous propensities of his followers. To drink the blood of the Servian grape, is punishment enough in itself, I am sure. Brandy, rakee, and liquors are considered highly

poisonous, and all spirits are denounced as evil spirits.

The evening of the day on which we were to start arrived, and we put on the dresses we were to wear on the road. I wore a light holland coat, a pair of scarlet Turkish trousers, boots, and spurs, with a turban of scarlet, twisted on a red-fez cap. To tie myself up in my sashes was, every day, a work of time and labour. First, I rolled an immensely thick and heavy shawl several times round my waist; then I tied on a crimson shawl, and buckled on a broad leather belt, constructed in the oriental fashion, to carry a perfect arsenal of arms, stuck into which were my good Turkish yataghan, pistols, and daggers.

On the present occasion, I placed my pistols in their holsters. Over my belt I tied a long scarf of scarlet silk, with fringed ends. Emily equipped herself in a mon-

strous Tuscan straw hat, as a protection against the sun and from her scarlet sash peeped the crossed hilt of a dagger, and the butts of a brace of pocket-pistols.

I We saw the six horses in the court below, and watched the long and clumsy operation of saddling them. Iovon was very busy and bustling ; Giovanni, very shrill and self-important ; and, at last, the baggage and mattresses were piled on the back of the luckless beast who was to carry them, giving very much the appearance of a loaded camel to that generous steed.

Meanwhile, the windows and balconies of the hotel, overlooking the court-yard, were crowded with officers and other well-dressed people ; and ever and anon some one passed our lattice, walking along the balcony, and peeping in at the new lions, as if our room were in reality a den for wild beasts. At length we heard the horses were ready, and

descended the stairs of the hotel to the archway between the court and the street. The throng there had increased to the number of some hundreds, but all were grave as oysters, and preserved as solemn an air as might be expected from a mob of Swiss patriots, assembled to witness the execution of the renowned William Tell.

The officers present kept order and silence in the crowd ; but it was scarcely needed : they were all as mute as stock-fish, and looked like people who had come to witness an incredible feat, and evidently regarded it as no laughing matter. One by one, the horses were brought up and mounted. Emily had a European saddle ; so had the Tartar. The Suridgee had the usual saddle of the country—a mighty tower of sheepskins and cloths, placed on a high wooden framework, on the horse's back.

Giovanni, with a cloak and a number of

cushions, made one of the red saddles a tolerably comfortable and endurable seat; whilst I mounted a similar one, but without the adjuncts. The Tartar flourished his long pipe-stick; the Suridgee buried the sharp angles of his shovel-shaped stirrups in his steed's flanks; and forth we ambled, cleaving the crowd in twain, as a vessel divides the waves.

Stumbling, slipping, and sliding, in a manner that would have maddened the director of an insurance office, the horses clambered up the steep and rocky streets, and we emerged from the gates of historic Belgrade. I was not long in finding my little red saddle the worst of possible devices; I, therefore, exchanged horses with the Suridgee, whose sheepskins and old sacks made a comfortable seat enough. I strongly advise all Eastern travellers to eschew the showy little crimson saddles, which it requires

the apprenticeship of a life-time to get used to, and to take English saddles with them, which will materially increase their comfort in a long march.

To return to our journey.

We entered on the road to Constantinople; and the Tartar, who had lingered behind, came up, caracoling and curvetting on his black steed, whose arched neck was flaked with white spots of foam.

So superb looking and stately a horseman I never before saw, as he pranced on to the front; his noble form set off to advantage by his tight white damask vest and huge crimson embroidered trousers—his swarthy features glowing with animation. His boots, of immense size, were characteristic of his profession; his wide shawl cincture was hung all over with little boxes, bags of tobacco, and handjars; while his pistols projected in front, and his broad curved scimi-

tar was supported by a red cord, which was passed over one shoulder, after the manner of a highland scarf.

Your genuine Oriental, destitute of pockets, affixes everything to his sash, and thinks nothing of any weight which he can carry at his waist. Lovon's dress was remarkably showy, and he guided our cavalcade by the wave of his hand, or the flourish of his pipe-stick.

From a mound we looked back on Belgrade, over which the sun was setting, gilding the shining waters of the Save, and flinging a blood-red gleam upon the city of the Serbian. My horse was a tolerably good one, and an amazing favourite with the Suridgee, who never wearied in praising him. "Dobra, dobra" ("Good, good"), he exclaimed, and "Dobra" I willingly replied. "Ah, ah!" was the response, "Suridgee bashi dobra." It now grew rapidly dark, and became

soon necessary, by the Servian's creed, to scare the demons from our path. Accordingly, the Tartar and Suridgee, as in duty bound, commenced a monotonous wailing song, varied with the most appalling and unearthly shrieks, groans, and yells.

The howling was of so awful a nature as most effectually to secure us against any perils from disembodied assailants, — they might it is true, give warning to mortal robbers of our approach, and they evidently struck terror into the boldest demons of the Servian waste.

Every now and then, as we cantered on in front, we overtook a conveyance, drawn by malicious-eyed bullocks, looking excessively like evil spirits, in the dim light. Their drivers always halted, and drew up to let us pass. After some hours' riding, we reached Grojsko, the first post station, where we were to pass the night. We had our mattresses

spread on the floor of the best room in the house, and asked for some supper. I was astonished to find a large and handsome stable, well illuminated, lofty and airy. A Turkish stable always affords a great contrast to the wretched hovels in which Croatian horses pass their miserable lives. The purveyor sent forth into the village, returned with three eggs, a loaf of *tough* black bread and an abundance of fresh cold water in a large brown pitcher.

Luckily, I never felt less hungry, or more thirsty. Lemons and sugar we fortunately possessed, and I made innumerable glasses of lemonade before I could be prevailed on to lie down and rest.

The room was close and hot; and as the door opened into the street, we slept with it open, for the benefit of fresh air; and we were much startled early the next morning by the apparition of a cow, who was de-

purely making ineffectual attempts to squeeze herself through the open door of our sleeping apartment, which she doubtless mistook for a cow-house, or shed. Well, the mistake was very pardonable. Our people lay down anywhere on the ground outside the stable-door. At about half-past six, I awoke us; we made a hurried toilet, drank a hasty cup of tea, and were soon ready, and once more in the saddle.

To eat was impossible—the intense heat and fatigue took away the power. This was fortunate in one respect, as eggs do not abound at Grojsko; and as for meat, you might as well ask for beefsteaks in a Brahmin's house, or a Banyan hospital. We rode on to Kolar, where we dined on a piece of soddened kid in water, a lettuce, and some cherries. We had a bottle of the Jew's rosoglio with

us, which proved an excellent restorative; and after riding in the fierce heat of the day, was very invigorating.

Everyone in Belgrade had warned us to ride early and late only; but we found it impossible to avoid travelling in the hottest part of the day. About noon we generally managed a two or three hours' halt, when it was possible; but we were often in the saddle when Apollo sent down the rays from his burning quiver, as keenly as the arrows which pierced the children of Niobe.

By the bye, it is an incident worth mentioning, that the morning we left Grojsko, we started without Iovon, but had not gone far when, instead of his overtaking us, we met him riding very fast up a hill, brandishing his long pipe-stick in a menacing attitude, with a white muslin handkerchief twisted round his head, and the ends streaming in the wind, giving him exactly the air of a

Bedouin Arab. He rode furiously up, flourishing his pipe-stick menacingly over the Suridgee's head, and violently abused the father, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother of the atrocious "Pezzadink," who, it seems, had taken the wrong turning, and led us two miles out of our way.

We went on through a prettily-wooded country, full of deep miry streams and morasses, through which our horses floundered with difficulty. The heat was intense, and might make every one but a native think of fevers, &c.

Game is not very plentiful, considering the deeply-wooded nature of the country;—but when a hare broke from her cover and cantered down the road, Iovon spurred out, on the instant, with all the activity of a genuine Arab, whose kefichs his head-dress resembled, and fired his long barrelled pistol full at pussy's head. A flying shot, and well

aimed; but we were doomed to make our supper that night without hare soup, although the Tartar lingered still among the bushes, to have another shot at the long-eared fugitive.

This was near Hassan Pacha Palanka, which is a snug little village enough—but it was not easy to find a house with a spare room in which to sleep, and we had to remain in the street, the centre of a crowd, and the cynosure of all eyes, for several minutes.

At last a room was found with an earthen floor; and for sole furniture, a kind of wooden platform covered with a straw mat. The windows were, as usual, glassless, and closed with paper-paned shutters. The door opened on the immense barn, or common room, always found in Servian houses, where unaccountable numbers of people, sit, smoke and sleep, round a gipsy fire lighted on the

floor, with no chimney, or egress of any kind for the smoke, excepting the window or open door.

This room is free to poultry and sometimes even to pigs and horses. Here we were installed with due formality; and here were a chicken and some tea brought to us in due time. Whenever we wanted anything in a Servian house, we sallied forth and imperatively commanded the first person we met to get it for us ; and I must say they always executed our behests with unmurmuring alacrity.

In the East, if you do but usurp authority, the Orientals instantly, and as a matter of course, obey you. It matters little that you have not the shadow of any right over those around you : one soon gets into imperative and despotic habits there, and I never hesitated to beckon any one I saw, to light my pipe, hold my horse, or perform any other

menial office I might require,—and this without payment,—merely by the power of an authoritative tone and gesture.

The curiosity of the people is very excessive. They stare at you through the windows of your humble apartment, and sometimes even force their way in at the door; and if you stir out, they follow and watch you, as they would a wild beast. Strange animals we were to them.

I soon found out, though, that when I walked about with my lighted chibouque, the curiosity of the natives was far less annoying. They seemed to think a Frank, who employed his time in so very laudable and praiseworthy a manner, could not be so very great and absolute a barbarian, after all.

CHAPTER IV.

THE Servian forest is grand and stately enough, and its cool shady recesses only need the soft emerald turf of England, instead of the short parched brown herbage grass of Turkey, to be the most inviting places for pic-nics ever seen. Wherever you go, dark sweeping glades, and vistas covered with arching oaken boughs meet the eye.

The shepherd's pipe, or, rather, the goat-herd's, pours its wild strains in pastoral cadence from the thickets. I never ex-

pected to hear such music from red-capped Corydons, nor to find Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia realized by turbaned swains.

Somewhere near Batuschin, we saw numbers of bright-winged kingfishers, like flying rainbows, among the trees ; and also, with many other curious specimens of the feathered tribe, a beautiful bird of a bright green colour, closely resembling a parroquet. Bright, gaudy-winged beetles were flitting about, and showy strange insects loaded the evening air.

On we went, tramping through the park-like scenery, now crawling at the rate of a walking funeral, now dashing onwards like a charge of cavalry, as the wild hearts of our attendants became excited by some passing event.

The shoes of the Servian horses are nailed on over a flat thick plate of block tin, which, by covering the ball of the foot en-

tirely, prevents the possibility of their ever picking up a stone, but renders them more liable to slip over the rough roads.

At Batuschin, the people were savage and unfriendly. We were housed almost by force, and the natives were consequently in a terrible passion. At Tagodin, Giovanni made us some soup, and came to us complaining bitterly that the Tartar had done his utmost to flavour it with lemons, and upon his resisting the innovation, honest Iorou almost insisted upon substituting instead the yolks of eggs, and could only be induced to desist from his attempts by Giovanni's frantic appeal to us. The Tartar doubtless derived his notions from some "Turkish" mess, and appeared greatly crest-fallen, that his well-meant, though somewhat bizarre attempts to please our European palates, were not appreciated.

The roads about here were terribly miry

and bad. We had to ford a considerable river, and somewhere near Selinpeljee were ferried across another, over whose swift current frowned the black peaks of the mighty Balkan. Far as the eye could reach, the dark masses of the gloomy mountains rolled away, mass upon mass, cragg looming over cragg, with here and there some cloudy height towering above the rest.

The postmasters were all very civil, and gave us up their rooms to dine or rest in with apparent willingness. All knew the indefatigable Iovon, who alternately bullied a refractory Suridgee, and sought cherries for us.

One afternoon, as we were approaching the Ottoman border, I was agreeably surprised to find myself on a really good horse, a fact I first discovered by the murmurs of approbation that followed him from the post-house, and greeted him in the next vil-

lage, and which reminded me of the reception of the ex-race horse Peter, in "Harry Lorrequer."

The Suridgee was a showily-dressed young fellow, well armed with pistols and brass-mounted yataghan, and evidently very proud of himself. But even this was quite a secondary feeling to his admiration for my horse. After three or four hours' riding I remarked that the Tartar called up the Suridgee, spoke to him in a whispering tone, took the halter of the baggage horse himself, and dismissed the fellow, who, striking his stirrups into the panting sides of his good little grey, bounded forward, and was out of sight in a moment.

When his red tarboush had fairly disappeared over the hill, I began to think there was something very mysterious in this conduct. I knew the Bulgarian rebels against the Pacha of Nissa were hanging somewhere about the frontier.

To interrogate Iovon on such a subject was useless, I knew; but I thought I might as well push on over the oak-covered hills, and reconnoître as well as the Suridgee, keeping a bright look out for an ambush, and trusting to my horse's heels in case of meeting any of the revolted Rayas. Off I went, then, at full speed, passing the astonished Tartar, and hurrying up the wooded slope.

I was soon out of sight, and galloped on as the shadows of evening fell on the deep woodland country. The ground was deep and bad, and I caught no glimpse of the Suridgee, who had gone off at a tremendous rate. It grew dark very rapidly, and the occasional gleam of a fire from some distant forest grove was not very encouraging.

If the insurgent Christians were really lurking near, I might have ridden into their very camp without knowing it, and "Dobra

liahanoches" would hardly, I fear, have done for a password.

After a time I halted until our own cavalcade came sweeping down the gloomy hill.

A turning of the road now brought us to the lonely farm-house, where we were to sleep, and where the missing Suridgee himself received us.

On the banks of a large river we passed a row of shops, entirely composed of green boughs, and presenting a most singularly picturesque though comfortless appearance.

The town beyond had a very Russian air, and abounded in men in the European dress, which looked unutterably hideous, side by side with the flowing robes of the gaudy East.

We were lodged in a small close room, ten feet by six, and too low to stand upright in, which was only to be reached by

mounting a flight of wooden steps at the farther end of a muddy yard. Our mattresses were spread in this black hole; but being unwilling to allow our old Greek host to emulate the tyrant of Calcutta, we took possession of the straw matted platform or covered square verandah outside, where all the winds of heaven could enter, and where our landlord with his family usually passed the evening. Here, then, we established ourselves, Iyon hanging up his arms in token of possession, and then leaving us to prepare our supper and his own.

Our presence in the house was outrage enough to the feelings of the proprietor, but our occupation of his favourite verandah was an act of lawlessness that drove him well-nigh to desperation. He sent us word that the air there was bad, and that we should most infallibly catch the *cholera*, unless we exchanged the fresh breeze and

cool platform for the stifling atmosphere of our small dungeon.

All was in vain ; the host and his son, an intelligent young Greek, fruitlessly brought all their eloquence into play. We obstinately disregarded their miserable faces and heart-rending, passionate ejaculations, and firmly held our ground. Next morning, when we went away, the agony of the Greeks had increased to such a towering pitch of rage, that they seemed inclined to vent it in pulling their own house to pieces, there being nothing of ours left to avenge their wrongs upon.

The horses from this post-house were curiously wooden-looking animals, whose joints were too stiff and clumsy to allow of their going out of a foot's pace, except under repeated application of whip and spur, when they were impelled into a shuffling amble, or floundering rolling canter,

while they evidently indulged in the delusion, that they were going at racing speed. We saw a number of the sacred storks that day, poising themselves on their long wings over the corn fields, or gravely wading in the morasses, picking up frogs.

Iovon was sacrilegious enough to fire off his pistol at one, and the bird's utter stupefaction shewed his astonishment at this sudden and unprecedented act of treachery and ferocity in the human species. Gates frequently cross the roads here, and the trouble of opening them forcibly recalled old rides among the Kentish hills to my recollection.

We had travelled for about two hours, when, from the black mountain range, a terrific tempest of wind and rain came driving down upon us. The thunder belled, and the lightning flashed fearfully from the cloudy and shadowy peaks of the

threatening Balkan. The Tartar dashed to the baggage horse, seized the umbrellas and gave them to us ; but, alas ! the fierce wind turned them inside out in an instant, and nearly bore us and them away together, while the rain dashed in torrents in our faces, and soon drenched us as completely as if we had been dragged through a river. Vainly did we lash the miserable brutes of post hacks,—they would not move faster than about five miles an hour. The very Tartar, in his oilskin capote and huge boots, was dripping like a river god ; the Suridgee looked like a drowned rat, Giovanni implored his patron saint, Emily resembled a Nereid, and I myself upheld a useless umbrella with exceeding difficulty, while carrying water enough in my petticoat, like Turkish trousers, once scarlet, but now, alas ! maroon colour, to supply a thirsty Arab village.

We rode for some hours dripping, drenched, and chilled, until we came to a solitary and dreary looking post-house, where we unloaded the baggage-horse, changed our clothes, having first turned the postmaster out of his only room for the purpose, got some hot water with great trouble, hunted out a flask of brandy from a bag, and made a wholesome and invigorating repast of unripe cherries, cucumbers, eggs, and black ligneous bread. It was about the middle of the next day when we arrived at Altzenissa, under as scorching a sun as ever threatened to addle northern brain.

We were housed at the postmaster's, as usual, during our noon-day halt, and provided with a dinner of eggs and cherries. While seated at our repast, a highly respectable Mussulman, with a long white beard and flowing robes, came in, and regarded

us with looks of unbounded respect and admiration.

He inquired whence we had come, and whether we were going to Stamboul, also if Emily could *write*!

On being answered through an interpreter in the affirmative, his wonder and delight grew absolutely childish, and he went away salaaming and smiling like a bearded angel.

Next in came a short, slight, well-dressed old man, in a white turban, and with a dark intelligent face, white hair, and a glittering eye. He accosted us in excellent *English*, and when I had taken a whiff or two of his chibouque, informed us that he was Kishld Prendrich, a celebrated Servian Tartar, who had been forty or fifty times to Constantinople with cabinet messengers. We had heard the fame of his exploits at Belgrade.

At his request, or rather entreaty, we rode back through the town to visit his house, which we found to be pretty and white, built and furnished in something like the European style.

He was extremely hospitable, and very proud of the English books and other comforts to be found in his residence. He gave us some very good coffee and sherbet, and kissed our hands at parting, with all the grace of a thorough-bred Oriental. His horse, fitted with an English saddle, stood at the gate, held by a liveried and booted tiger, and all his establishment bespoke him one who had amassed riches in his profession, and had European tastes for his hobby and mania.

We rode for a good many miles among the dark and frowning mountains, whose misty crags seemed to menace a storm, when the boding sound of muttering

thunder fell upon our ear, and the clank of the Tartar's chain bridle behind me announced that he was in a hurry.

Off we went, pell mell up the hill, galloping wildly in the rapidly falling darkness, while the growling thunder gradually increased into a sullen roar, and then broke into a succession of stunning peals that rolled and vibrated among the mountains, whose echoes answered fearfully to the artillery of the sky.

Crash upon crash, roll upon roll, burst from the veil of darkness, while incessant flashes lit up the heavens with blood-red lurid gleams of light. Streams of forked lightning fell constantly on the road and among the bushes at the side, and to hold the plunging horses was impossible, had we tried, which we did not. On the contrary, our attendants animated them with the wildest cries, as we dashed furiously

through the storm; and just as the heavy rain began, we caught sight of a lonely police station and spurred gladly towards it.

The Jew's dagger escaped from my sash as we neared our place of refuge; but no time was to be lost, and we were scarcely housed beneath the sheltering roof, before a very avalanche of rain, mixed with blinding flashes of lightning, burst forth from the gloomy clouds, deluged the earth in a moment, and converted every mountain rivulet into a roaring torrent.

To proceed under this waterspout, which realized fully the notion of "the windows of heaven being opened," was impossible. We therefore, without leave, either asked or obtained, walked into the officer's room, which contained a table, two stools, and two raised boarded bedsteads. Here we established ourselves *sans cérémonie*, and ordered our mattrasses to be spread.

The floor was of stone and very uneven, while a collection of bridles and arms, guns, swords, and yataghans, with enormous holster-pistols hung round the walls, completed the furniture, useful and ornamental, of the apartment.

The Ottoman frontier lay close at hand, and was plainly visible from the window. A high sort of double barn door crossed the road: its leaves were kept shut; and this, we were told, was the boundary of the Sultan's empire and hereditary dominions. We were in the frontier police station on the Servian side; eggs abounded, and they gave us at tea two roasted thrushes, while Iovon brought us a duck for supper.

At night I was awakened by a noise of scuffling and pattering in the room. I looked round, and saw by the light of the burning candle a large black rat. I hunted him to the window, and drove him through

it with a thrust of my yataghan, and returned to my broken repose.

The next morning, the rain still continued, though with abated violence, and the ground, as far as the eye could reach, was one vast puddle. The soldiers, thus imprisoned, amused themselves by dancing a strange kind of national dance in a circle, to the sound of a flageolet of reeds, to while away the time. By and bye a policeman took his long flint gun, and kicking off his heavy shoes, crawled down among the bushes that lined the road, most carefully concealing himself. Then another fellow took his piece and followed his companion in the same manner to the ambush. I fully thought they were lying in wait for some unwary traveller, bandit, smuggler, or rebel; or perhaps, by the precautions they took, for some wild beast, when, to my amazement, as I watched their

red eyes gliding from bush to bush, the nearest soldier fired his musket at a cluster of unsuspecting birds on the ground. His comrades set up a wild shout of "Victoria!" from under the sheltering roof of the verandah, and the conquering hero came bounding along with looks of triumph, and one small thrush most feloniously slaughtered with the government powder and shot, dangling from his hand. Thrushes, it appears, are game in Servia.

Soon after this notable piece of sport, Iovon carried the Jeskiri to be inspected by the officers on the Ottoman side of the "door," and returned, followed by the Suridgee, leading the Turkish post-horses, which had been brought from Nissa for us that morning, the Servian horses not being permitted to pass the boundary.

We mounted, notwithstanding the state of the roads, and the rain, which was still

falling, and rode through the gate, passing at once from a Christian into a Moslem country, by the ceremony of riding through the open leaves of an old barn door! That clumsy and heavy portal seemed made to shut out Christianity.

On the other side of the gate were several policemen and our destined escort, an old grey-bearded Mussulman soldier, with a long musket slung over his back, the muzzle of which was protected against the wet by a sort of miniature drum-stick. He rode an active little horse, and wore a crimson cap and an old scarecrow suit of clothes, which would have qualified him for an inimitable Guy Fawkes!

Our horses were very tolerable, but the drizzling rain and the heavy wet ground, fetlock deep in mud, were anything but inviting. Still the journey was to be performed; the cattle were hired, and back to

Nissa they must go ; so the Suridgee howled fearfully, after the fashion of his tribe, and off we dashed, the horses' hoofs splashing in chorus to his lugubrious music.

The rain came driving in heavy sheets before the wind, and we kept our umbrellas up the greater part of the ride. Away we went along a road, half mud, half water ; crossing streams, and wading pools considerably more than knee deep.

One marshy lagoon we waded must have been half a mile in width, very deep, and much too muddy to enable us to discover the road below. At another time, we scrambled along the shingly and slippery banks of a small river, where a trifling slide would have plunged us headlong into the boiling stream below.

In about three hours we stopped at a small hamlet, where we found a motley population, half black, half white, and we were

regaled, on a wooden platter, with dwarf strawberries at the khan of the said village.

26 We next rode over a wild heath, of considerable extent, much such a site as Macbeth and the weird sisters must have held their meeting in. For a long time we rode over this swampy and slippery plain, the very image of desolation and solitude; until suddenly looking up, we saw, far distant and dim, the domed mosques and snowy minarets of Nissa, looking like a number of tall, slender pencil-cases on the horizon.

37 We saw this town, as is the case with most Oriental cities, for some hours ere we reached it; and the nearer we approached, the wilder, more uninhabited, and barren the country appeared. It is ever thus with a town on whose walls waves the Crescent banner. Cultivation flies from the city ruled by a Turkish pacha, and the hus-

bandman cares not to toil where the haughty conqueror, the Tartar barbarian, has permanently fixed his camp. This sudden transition from the bustling haunts of men to total solitude must always strike a European traveller.

We entered the town at last, passing through gates guarded by Turkish sentinels and strong fortifications, through whose frowning bastions our way wound. Floundering, slipping, and stumbling over the break-neck pavement, headed by the soldier, we threaded a labyrinth of streets, and came at last to a huge, crazy, wooden bridge, which quivered and rocked in all its rotten, rickety piers, as the noble river rushed by in its strength.

The river itself, swollen and turbid, on account of the recent rains, presented an imposing aspect. It was a broad and mighty stream of rushing yellow water,

flaked with snow-white masses of foam, bounding and leaping madly along in huge tawny waves. The vast piles of the bridge reeled and trembled as they met the swift fury of the rolling torrent. The large trees, lately growing in a dry meadow, but now half sunk in discoloured water, shook and bent like pliant willows; and the monstrous chestnut-coloured billows, crested with wildly-tossed wreaths of foam, roared in their rapid course like a pack of hungry and furious wolves.

We crossed the bridge, and passed through the Turkish quarter, with its strange-looking, wooden, booth-like shops, the counters of which were crowded with staring smokers, in white turbans, green robes, and yellow slippers, who all gazed at us with the greatest curiosity and amazement.

When we had passed from under the

roof of the bazaar, we soon made our way through the Greek or Christian part of the town, and dismounted at the door of a two-storied red house, where a parcel of pelissed and flat-capped boys thronged round, and several black-bearded men came out to welcome us; one of them spoke Italian. It was the house of a Greek Cardinal, but as much like an inn as any house of entertainment to be met with in the country.

They gave us a room up-stairs, carpetted and fitted up with a comfortably-cushioned divan—our sofa by day, and our couch by night. We found it a great luxury to be able to change our wet clothes; and Giovanni cooked us a meagre meal, as European as possible, but still a miserable imitation of the French cuisine, to which Iovon, whose tastes were more Turkish, insisted on adding two huge vegetable marrows stuffed—not with pearls, but—with

meat and rice; also some cucumbers, pears, cherries, and sherbet, greatly to the horror of his Neapolitan fellow-servant, who detested anything and everything Turkish.

Just as we were going to begin dinner, however, his Eminence the Cardinal, with the doctor of the 5th Regiment, paid us a formal visit, attended by a pipe-bearer, carrying the Hellenic prelate's chibouque. We most heartily wished the red-capped doctor, with his pure Italian, and the black-robed Greek ecclesiastic, with his talk about *Æschylus*, in a place, the climate whereof is considered to be seven times hotter than that of Demerara or Jamaica.

Still they sat and conversed while our dinner cooled, and seemed really to think that the best refreshment for two wet, chilled, and hungry people was their delectable company, which would have been dry and unpalatable enough under any cir-

cumstances. At last they went away, leaving us to dine and sleep in peace.

The Cardinal inhabited the room opposite our own, the only door of which was thick red curtain. Here he smoked his pipe all day on the divan, and dined in company with our servants! If Greek Cardinals make a constant practice of dining with servants, I should be curious to know who the usual companions of their ordinary priests can be.

CHAPTER V.

NEXT day I went up to the fortress pretty early, with the Medico as an interpreter. Passing through a crowd of guards and attendants, we entered a long corridor, wound our way through a labyrinth of unfurnished, white-washed ante-chambers, whose bare walls seemed strangely out of character in a palace, and came to a small room when the doctor preceded me, to announce to the Pacha my intended visit. He returned in a few moments, saying, that

his Highness would receive me at once. Another minute, and we were in the presence of Hussein Pacha.

This functionary, the famous Viceroy of Bulgaria, of whose tyrannic rule so many stories are current in Belgrade, is a man of perhaps sixty years, with a white beard and an exceedingly swarthy complexion, such as I have remarked in many Anatolian Turks. His figure is broad, square-built, heavy, and powerful, but of clumsy proportions. He was attired in a frock-coat, loose white trousers, black shagreen slippers, a black stock, and starched collar.

Like many Turks of high rank, he has large broad hands, and very small, well-formed feet. His features expressed a sort of good-humoured ferocity, a kind of savage *bonhommie*; but his eye was red and fierce as that of a wild bear. He was very courteous and civil, although his manners

were by no means so prepossessing as those of Vlasuf Pacha.

As soon as we were seated on the divan, the Pacha clapped his hands, after the fashion of the Arabian Nights, and several servants appeared, to whom he growled out some words from between his grim moustache, and the obsequious attendants touched their foreheads and breasts, and retired, but only to return immediately with sweetmeats, sherbet, pipes, and coffee. The pipes were chibouques, six feet in length, made of lilac stems with the bark on.

After a few silent puffs, the conversation was opened by the Pacha, who expressed his delight at my visit to his capital. Of course I replied that his Highness' honours were more exalted than the stars of heaven : and the old man acknowledged the com-

pliment with his hand on his heart by the expressive word "*Pekke*."

The Pacha next informed me that he was not, like other Turks, uneducated and illiterate, but that he had travelled in Wallachia, and had even once been in part of Europe! He then asked the news from London, spoke with great respect of Lord Palmerston and Sir Stratford Canning, and informed me that the Reis Effendi was his cousin. I expressed due surprise and admiration of the fact, and he went on to say that he had long wished to see both London and Paris, but was now too old to travel, and was besides unable to speak any European languages.

I suggested that perhaps his Highness might be one day Ambassador to London, and that he could easily learn a little English if he wished it, or of course easily

dispense with it, if his servants spoke it. "My beard is white," answered the old man, stroking his grey moustache. "When I was young, as you now are, I might have done these things."

He was very inquisitive about the population of London, and the number of carriages to be seen in Hyde Park. He was also anxious to know the state of India, whether I had ever seen the Turkish Elchi Bey in London, and, above all, whether the English Consul at Constantinople were my brother? On receiving a negative reply, he seemed surprised, and almost incredulous, saying, that as I was an Englishman it was very strange that we should not be related.

He gave me permission to go over his palace, which was hardly worth the trouble, and put his own carriage at our disposal to drive round the town and visit the anti-

quities. He concluded his offers by the promise of an ample teskeri, and a strong cavalry escort to accompany us on our journey.

Just then the Jewish Council arrived, in their robes of state, to consult about something with the Pacha. They were a swarm of old gentlemen in white turbans with flowing blue and yellow gowns, and on their entrance I took my leave of Hussein, and left the palace in company with the obliging doctor.

We next proceeded to the Commandant's quarters. Passing a guard, and stepping over a gaunt wolf-dog, we entered a low-built house, in an inner room of which we found the dignitary himself, surrounded by soldiers and servants, in a wonderful state of deshâbille, and performing the religious ablutions enjoined by the Mussulmen law. When he had finished he dismissed his attendants, put

on his gold-laced uniform coat, and received me with cordiality.

Achmet Effendi, the Colonel of the 5th Regiment, would have been called a General of Brigade in most countries, as he commands four thousand men, and receives five thousand a-year from the Sultan.

He was the most amiable and good-natured Moslem I ever conversed with. His dark complexion proclaimed him a Turk from Asia, and I believe he was a man of high rank and birth.

We assumed our places on his divan, and the Commandant clapped his hands for the everlasting pipes and coffee. In came the acorn cups of scalding liquid, and the long cherry-wood chibouques; and puffing and talking commenced, varied by occasional sips of the burning hot liquid in the fairy little cups of curious old china.

The Colonel had been in Syria during the

campaign against Egypt, and had been present at the siege of Acre. I think he spoke with about equal reverence of Ibrahim Pacha and Sir Charles Napier.

He was very glad, he said, that we had not passed through Bosnia, which he assured us was a country fit only for wild animals, and did not contain a single man of any education or intelligence.

“I was on the Bosnian frontier once,” he said, “fighting against the Ban Jellachich. It is a bad land; the people, uncivilized brutes, very few of whom are Moslems by blood, and the soil is so poor, that the keep of a horse, which comes to thirty piastres a day here in Bulgaria, costs eighty in Bosnia.”

I asked him what he thought of the far-famed city of Bosnæ-Serai, the garrison and stronghold of Bosnia, that military semi-republic which rejects the rule of a Pacha.

He answered, that it was a fine city, and prettily situated, but the people bad and turbulent.

The Bulgarian rebellion, he told me, was nearly at an end, and I should find tranquillity generally restored throughout the province; and even the mountain villages on our route, he seemed to think, we should find tolerably quiet. At the same time he offered me any escort I pleased, either infantry or cavalry, from Nissa to Sophia. "Take ten men," he said; "take twenty, thirty, nay, a hundred, if you will: you shall be more than welcome."

I thanked him, and expressed a wish to have two or three dragoons or *sewarri*. These were readily promised, although the revolt, they thought, then existed only along the banks of the Danube, near Widdin. Still, though they admitted the existence of abundance of rebels, the Doctor and Colonel

could by no means be induced to admit that of robbers. They stoutly and unblushingly assured me, that nowhere in Turkey, not even in the outcast and forbidden province of Bosnia, with its hordes of barbarians, did any banditti ever make their appearance.

This denial was, I suppose, a kind of bravado to establish a reputation for the civilization of their own country, and to hide as much as lay in their power the gaping wounds of the Ottoman Empire. I afterwards saw many bloody and ghastly proofs of the existence of robbers in Turkey, and cannot therefore credit the accuracy of the evidence of my informants at Nissa, to the contrary.

The number of the population of London greatly puzzled our friend Achmet Effendi. He spoke of the city of Tiflis as being, according to his notion, one of the most populous in the world. At last he proposed that

I should hear the band play ; and calling in a tall, swarthy, fine-looking Milazim, or ensign, he sent him to give directions for the performance, and requested me to name an hour in the morning, when, if fine, I should like to see the troops on parade. He even offered to expedite the arrival of some anticipated cavalry and artillery from some town in the south, and get up a review expressly for my amusement.

He next sent a servant to fetch a curious kind of straw mosquito fan, made at Mecca, which he begged leave to present to Emily, with his compliments, to keep off the flies on the road to Constantinople. At last the band was announced as in readiness to discourse "most eloquent music," and after shaking hands with the kind old Achmet Effendi, who had been forty-five years in the Turkish army, I took my leave.

I walked up to the barracks, accompanied by the Medico, who having been in Italy, and wishing at some future time to visit France and England, asked me if there were not a railroad from Amsterdam to London!

The Milazim, who met us at the gate of the barracks, looked exceedingly like a sergeant, garnished with a white shoulder belt. The guard stood to arms, and the officers buzzed around us like a swarm of bees, with swords hilted with transparent horn; while queer little stars, brass crescents, and small cartridge boxes, covered the breasts of their uniforms.

I was introduced to one or two of the *chefs d'escadron*, and we all sat down in front of the court, where the swarthy crimson-capped band was mustered. A dusky Arab, the band-master, an officer of higher rank than a Captain, in the Turkish army, waved his hand, and the dingy-faced musi-

cians struck up. Very well they played too, and a pretty dose of music they gave us.

First they played two Operas through : they then rattled over Polkas and Waltzes enough to set even the grim Osmanlee dancing ; and next a Russian and a Polish march ; also a Turkish march and retreat, which was very curious.

The peculiarly wild, mournful, yet martial character of this their native Tartar music, the wild wailing notes of the trumpet, sad and plaintive beyond description, and the deep short rolling of the Turkish drum, have a charm to thrill the senses ; and I was carried back, in idea, to the days of Mohammed, the conqueror of the Greek Emperors, of Suleiman the Magnificent, Amurath, and Bajazet, and other long passed heroes of the haughty line of Othman. The Tartar race, though less refined and gentle

than the elegant and accomplished Arabs, were marked by even a prouder style of chivalry, although it might have been, perhaps, somewhat ruder in its character.

In the pauses of the music, the nearest Captain constantly looked at me for applause, and appeared much and wondrously gratified by a few words of approval ; and when the band, having been ordered to play me a salaam, gave a prolonged Oriental flourish and filed off in a body, the swarthy Arab band-master was presented to me by my worthy Asmodeus, the Medico. I praised his people's performances, which appeared to please him greatly, and we left the Parade.

But we were by this time surrounded by a swarm of officers, and I had first to visit their quarters, then the casernes of the private soldiers, who were all put under arms for my inspection. I was obliged to

examine arms, men, uniforms, paletots, knapsacks, cartouch-boxes,—everything.

The men were mostly short, thickset fellows: here and there were some fine-looking Osmanli soldiers, with bold, hardy, intelligent features; but all were Mahometans, no others being admitted into the army, and most of them, natives of Roumelia or Anatolia.

About seven Nugroi Monsenegrins were attached to every company of a hundred men. There were very few Albanians, or Bosnians; these warlike and gallant barbarians being mostly retained for body guards to Pachas, or for a force of irregular police soldiery.

The Turkish troops I consider to be well drilled automatons, in perfect discipline. Their uniforms are badly made, and a paltry imitation of the French; but they have been wise enough to keep the crimson cap with

its handsome purple tassel, instead of the European casquette. It was wise to retain this, as, although far less picturesque than the fine old turban, the red tarbousch is the chosen head-dress of every Moslem in the Ottoman Empire, from Sultan and Pacha down to the humblest caiquegee.

It was curious to see how the Turkish officers crowded round the infidel Frank, and with what eager childishness they showed him their accoutrements, and asked if they were the same in Europe. Had I been the Duke of Wellington, they could not have been more anxious to gain my approbation of their military perfections; and the soldiers, when I stopped before them, seemed to regard me as if I were the Sultan's Capidjee Bashi, the bearer of life and death.

After expressing my approval of their Nizam Djedeed, I went over the hospital,

whose excellent condition deserves really very great praise. The utmost care is taken of the sick in the Turkish service, and they are provided with every care and comfort.

The next thing I had to inspect was the barracks for the artillery. Cannon, saddles, sabres, pistols, men, and horses, all were paraded before me, and I approved of all. The saddles were black and heavy; the sabres short, curved and light; the pistols, rough and plain; the guns of brass; the gunners, tall fine men, and the horses large, strong, and spirited. They come from Wallachia. As I was conducted round the stable, the chain halters clattered and rattled, and the brutes kicked, as if animated by the spirit of the most malicious of Mussulman Fakeers.

I was then invited into the quarters of the captain in command of the artillery, and

soon found myself on a velvet divan, the centre of a group of officers, and with the long snaky tube of a narghilly between my lips, with the rose-water bottle of cut glass in my hand, smoking fragrant puffs of the most delicate Persian tobacco.

I was asked a thousand questions about the English army and the state of India, and I, in my turn, took the opportunity of catechizing my Paynim entertainers. I learned that a milazim, or ensign's pay, amounted to the magnificent sum of 24*l.* yearly, and that of a captain is 48*l.*, while a colonel in command of 4000 or 5000 men, has 5000*l.*, and a Pacha even 8000*l.* a-year.

The pay of a private soldier in the Turkish army is 20 piastres, or about 4*s.* monthly. But it is an understood thing that the low pay of the inferior officers and privates is fully compensated for and eked

out by various perquisites and contributions levied on the Christian Rayahs of the Porte and other inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan's treasury is all the better off from this arrangement, and the people, I fancy, not much the poorer.

They must be rich, those Bulgarian peasants, with all their outward show of poverty ; for their lands need little tilling to be fruitful and productive, and their wants are few and simple, so I think they may well afford to spare something to the "true believers," whose Crescent banner, and glittering sabres protect them from more unlicensed marauders.

Taking leave of my infidel hosts at last, I walked with the Doctor through the Turkish quarter, where a sergeant soon came to tell us the Colonel wished to see me, and was waiting to receive us close by. I was accordingly dragged into a linendraper's

shop, where Achmet Effendi was seated on the counter, solemn as a monarch on his throne, and in the grave and undisturbed possession of his chibouque.

Our arrival roused him from his dreamy state—his oriental reverie. Shaking hands with me, he presented me with his pipe until another was brought for me; and we then smoked and chatted for about twenty minutes. The Effendi did not meet an Englishman every day, and was apparently determined not to spare the Frank wanderer a single question that could possibly be asked about his distant country, its manners and customs.

But at last the Colonel's loquacity, like a watch, seemed to have run itself down, and I bade adieu to the kind old Moslem, and walked home to the Greek quarter with my red-capped Asmodeus, who resided in the next house to the Cardinal's, where we were for the present domiciled.

The next morning a Greek entered our room at breakfast time, and read out a slip of paper written in Italian, of which language he was himself totally ignorant. It consisted of an invitation to us to repair to a neighbouring chapel to be present at the funeral of an old woman, according to the rites of the Greek Church.

The man read out the notice in a parrot-like sing-song tone, ending with the words "*Perche e morta ma vecchia donna,*" and finished with a loud burst of laughter, as if the death of an unfortunate old woman were the wittiest and drollest joke in the Joe Miller world.

We obeyed the invitation, and adjourned to the little chapel, embellished within and without with its queer hieroglyphic paintings of the Panagia and the saints of the Greek Church, especially St. George of Cappadocia, St. Michael, and St. Dhemetri,

each of which beatified personages had "O a y c o s"—somebody, written under the paintings of their figures.

We found no one there but some sleepy vergers, getting ready a greasy store of thick candles and small farthing rushlights. Emily resolved to wait the arrival of the procession, and I determined that all the old women in Turkey, Greek or Moslem, living or dead, should not interfere with my breakfast-hour. I returned to my coffee, sent Giovanni to the chapel to mount guard, finished my "*heziri*," and walked back to the little Greek church, which was, by this time, crammed with wild-looking, wailing women, and savage-looking barbarians of men, whose half-shaved heads and long scalp-locks gave them a look even fiercer than that of any Mussulmen, and infinitely more disgusting.

Everybody held a flaring dripping candle, and began singing one of the most horrible,

whining, nasal litanies conceivable,—led off by the priests; while our host, the veiled (not prophet) cardinal, in his high cap of felt, beat time from his pulpit with his gilded episcopal crook.

Somebody put a candle into my hand, and I elbowed my way through a crowd of devotees to a pillar, against which I leaned to survey the scene. On a raised truck in the middle aisle, lay the dead body, with a picture of the Pangia, and a breviary on the breast, a huge mass of red and yellow flowers surrounding the head, and covering the wooden trestles of the bier. The face, of course, was uncovered. And, oh, how ghastly looked that stern and rigid face, from the mass of blooming roses and tawdry marigolds that shadowed it, as if in hideous mockery! There it lay, upturned, grim, and terrible, from the frightful and revolting contrast between the dead pallid lineaments and

the fresh buds of the Eastern garden. The eyes were wide open, and their fixed and stony glare seemed to have some strange and unearthly fascination, such as the skull of the Egyptian skeleton, when displayed at their feasts, might be supposed to possess.

Just then honest Iovon entered, crossed himself devoutly, muttered a prayer or two, strode across the church, and took my candle from me. I then made my way to where the officiating priest stood. He wheeled himself and his little moveable desk out of the way, chanting and howling all the time, and allowed me at last to gain Emily's side, whose candle-end was just beginning to burn her fingers.

The chanting being over, all the Greeks in turn stepped forward to kiss the book and the forehead of the old woman. This ceremony took up some time; but when each candidate had had his or her turn,

the bearers took up the body, and the whole procession moved off with it, shrieking out their intolerable nasal litanies. The sight was by no means a pleasing one. Two hours afterwards, we saw the truck which served as a bier standing against a wall for hire, with many other hand-barrows of the same kind, and I speculated upon its next probable destination. The women of the neighbourhood had decked their coal-black hair with the gay flowers they had plucked from the body of the dead. The idea seemed ghastly to me. I called on the doctor, who was not at home; but his servants presented me with a pipe and some coffee, and I awaited his return for some time on the commodious divan until my patience was exhausted, when I returned to our temporary home, and we passed away the morning as well as we could, in looking from the window at

the landscape, and talking over the varied events of that and the preceding day.

The scenery round Nissa is very noble in its mountain grandeur. Trees are scarce, it is true, and sylvan glades are not frequently to be found in Turkey, after once leaving the oak forests of Servia; but a magnificent range of blue heights, the haunts of the wolf and the chosen strongholds of the bear; a savage and undulating heath, with a broad, sweeping river, make up together a very passably pretty prospect.

In the evening we walked out, taking Iovon as a guide. His swarthy, good-humoured face, and stately figure, looked particularly striking that day, and a whim seized us, to carry him to England. We turned, and on the impulse of the moment told him our plan, and asked if he would like to go with us to the land of civilization. He doffed his cap, looked exceedingly

pleased, and answered in his broken German, "Ja, ja—gut, gut;" whereupon we told him that we intended remaining for a month or two at Stamboul, and then, returning to England. At this he looked positively enchanted, again reiterating "good, good," and the affair was settled.

It must be an adventurous proceeding for a native of the East to make up his mind to visit Europe, the unknown land of the West; and certainly an Englishman would have been harder to coax from Dover to Calais than honest Iovon from Stamboul to Southampton.

On our return I again visited the doctor. He was smoking in his garden with a circle of his Mussulmen friends, who all arose on my appearance, and with many a low salaam quitted the garden, leaving us together. We went up stairs, smoked a pipe, drank a few glasses of Egyptian rakee, by

way of *liqueur*, and looked over the Medico's store of Turkish and European arms.

He made me go through the broad-sword exercise with his curved Osmanlee scimitar, and then himself performed the Eastern guards and cuts. I got some information from him, too, of a military nature.

I learned that the Pacha had set off with the Colonel, and three battalions of foot, at a moment's notice, to quell the rebellion at Widdin, and command on the Danube's banks. I thought with pity on the old man, who had said his beard was grey, and that he should never travel more, thus sent from his home at the arbitrary will of his superior, with no time allowed him even to prepare for the sudden change, so uncongenial to his habits, and which might have been spared to the white-haired old soldier. Omail Pacha was to replace him in the government from which he had been so

summarily ejected, and all Nissa was in confusion and rout.

I asked what the Turks thought of the renegade Bem, now the apostate Murád Pacha. It seems they consider him quite as a fourth rate general, and keep him at Trutalui, like a sword in the sheath.

The army in general seemed to regret the destruction of the Janissaries, those lion-like champions of Islam. The Medico said, they remembered that in the days of Yanizar, the Sultan made great wars, and was treated on an equality with the Christian powers of Europe, before whom he was now forced to bow.

It seemed strange that any should disapprove of the extermination of that blood-stained and terrible corps, to whose unbridled licence and cruel ferocity every old inhabitant of Stamboul will bear witness; but the hardy and untamed barbarians were the

bravest and best soldiers of the Sultan's empire—the thunderbolts for the faith of the Prophet—the dread warriors who had fearlessly clambered over the gory walls of reeking Stamboul, and who had fought hand to hand with the heroic defenders of the Cross, and battled with the devoted knights upon the breach of the citadel of Malta.

When the fierce and Giaour-hating child of Hadgee Beksash fell, then was the sabre of the Osmanlee Sultan broken, and the right arm of the Tartar snapped in two.

CHAPTER VI.

THE following morning we resolved to leave Nissa ; and the horses were brought to the door at an early hour, to be saddled and bridled. When I came down, I found an old woman of Bulgaria haranguing Emily vociferously in her native language, and seeming infinitely disappointed at receiving no reply or notice of any kind. I greeted her with “Dobra dochos” (“Good day”), which at once won her heart, and procured us a torrent of blessings as we rode out of the yard.

The Greek girls, with their jet-black hair rolled up into plaits of immense thickness, and wearing coronals of scarlet cloth, spangled with brass crescents, came out in crowds to stare at us. Each of our horses wore a large blue amulet bead on his halter, which is never taken off, or tied securely in his tangled mane. This is supposed to be a charm against the evil or envious eye.

One of the troopers who escorted us had a beautiful pair of very long Albanian pistols, completely covered with frosted silver: they were about the most richly ornamented arms I ever saw. The police cavalry often wear splendid yataghans and pistols, and richly ornamented arms of every kind, which are all booty, taken from slain robbers, and which, of course, become the perquisite of the conqueror. Turkish marauders are very coxcombical about the fashion and adornment of their weapons.

A mile from Nissa, we passed the famous tower of, I am afraid to say how many thousand, Servian skulls—trophies which Iovon seemed particularly to admire. The tower is very perfect, and quite round; and the white grinning skulls, cemented together, have a very curious effect.

We rode through much water and mud, and dashed through some wet, swampy fields of tall Indian corn, to escape one great morass. Above us towered some cloud-wrapped giant mountains, to the tallest of which, lonely and isolated, Emily gave the name of Peak Ivan.

The road was most singular—if road it might be called—a mere horse-track or bridle-path; now climbing up the bed of a dry torrent on the hill-side, now crossing a shingly stream, intersecting a deep brook or small lagoon, now leading over a mass of sharp and slippery rocks. In crossing

one foaming water-course, we observed a large tortoise sheltering himself under a projecting stone from the force and fury of the current. We rode back into the bed of the stream ; and Iovon, swinging his heavy form to the ground, caught it dexterously, and rode off with it in triumph. He slung it in a bag on the Suridgee's horse.

We saw several other specimens of the tribe afterwards, one of which we caught ; but it was soon thrown away, as one crustaceous captive was a sufficient proof of the productions of a tropical climate.

On we went, scrambling up and down the most savage hills and stony glens, ever and anon stopping to change our escort, at one of the many police stations that formed the only habitations on the road. Strangely picturesque places they were ; windmill-looking huts, accessible by a ladder, and strong enough to stand a siege, while in

front of each was a nest or perch, consisting of a platform of branches, built up between two trees, on which stage sat and smoked a troop of gaily dressed soldiers, whose steeds were neighing below. They usually talked to Iovon in a cheerful tone, until the fresh escort mounted and rode forth.

Towards evening our horses showed signs of great fatigue, and we were but little less tired than the wearied animals we rode. An abrupt turning in the road brought us in sight of a tobacco caravan, by the side of which stood a loaded camel, the first we had seen in the East. Darkness fell around us long ere we reached Sarkjee.

The roads were frightfully bad, the night pitchy dark ; and the exhausted horses could only be kept from falling under us by the constant use of lash and spur. All our party, with the exception of Giovanni, who always followed us, were some distance ahead,

the soldier acting as guide and splashing through incessant pools of mud and water, where we followed as best we could. My whip and spurs were not idle ; but my horse was the most tired of the party, although he still exerted himself to clear the trifling ditches in the way, to the best of his ability.

The only light was afforded by the fitful glow of the pale fire-fly, whose bright wings and lustrous lamp shone the clearer for the dim obscurity. It was only very rarely that we could make out the towering form of the Tartar in front of us, whose giant bulk made him far more conspicuous than his companions.

Had robbers or rebels planted an ambuscade on the mountain road, we might have been easily surprised and cut off in detail, straggling and separated as we were. And had we known, as we afterwards knew, the deeds of blood which were enacted that

night, we might, perchance not have felt especially secure.

At last, when Emily was so tired as to be almost unable to sit her horse, having been that day eleven and a half long hours in the saddle, we heard the bull frogs croaking in the marsh that surrounded the ruinous old Turkish town of Sarkjee.

We rode into the cavalry barracks where we were to be quartered, dismounted from our jaded steeds, and followed the Tartar up-stairs.

A grave Turkish officer, in a dressing-gown, bid us welcome in broken Italian, and we took possession of a room, furnished with mats, and cushions stuffed with Indian corn. Never did beds seem so luxurious. Early the next morning we were awakened by a heavy trampling in the loft over our heads, of which we afterwards discovered the cause. Our toilet, as usual, was soon completed,—

a short process where people sleep half dressed,—and we made Giovanni get us some breakfast. The face of the worthy Neapolitan expressed mingled horror and triumph, and he tried hard once more to persuade us, even then, to give up our journey, and retrace our steps on account of the robbers, by whom he said the roads were infested. We were used to his croaking, and only laughed at his fear; and I assured him, on the colonel's authority, that no such personages were in existence.

Watching until I was at a distance from Emily, the Silician Calchas drew near, and told me, in a tone of mystery, that the heads of four robbers had been that night cut off, and brought in a few hours since by some mounted Arnaut troopers, and were at that very time actually in the loft over our sleeping and breakfast room. Thus was our noisy *réveille* accounted for.

He begged me not to mention this to "Madame," for fear of the shock to her nerves ; but I at once told her, and made him relate the whole story to us both, in utter disregard of his warning, and very reluctant countenance.

It seems that a band of eight of these ruffians, all Turks and Moslems of the south, had attacked a party of travellers in a rocky defile on the frontier, between Bulgaria and Roumelia. They had bound the only man of the company to a tree, and murdered his mother and sister before his eyes, when a party of cavalry rode up, and, alarmed by the cries of the unhappy victim, charged the robbers ; but these fierce marauders, far from flying, defended themselves with great ferocity against their assailants. A desperate skirmish ensued ; several soldiers were wounded, but four of the robbers were captured, and beheaded on the spot by the

keen sabres of the infuriated troopers. The four remaining desperadoes who composed the band, made their escape with wonderful agility, and gained the rocky mountain fastnesses, where even the fleet-footed Albanians were unable to follow them.

Their course was tracked to the hills of the north, and the bodies of their slain comrades, with their yataghans and pistols, splendidly ornamented with silver, remained the booty of the conquerors. But the spoil was divided; the limbs of the wretches were left to wolf and wild dog, eagle, or vulture, and the heads were brought in to be shown to the general in command of the cavalry regiments at Sarkjee, before whom also the rescued captive was taken in his grief, that he might give his evidence.

The extirpation of the whole gang of these dreaded outlaws was hoped for, as they had committed many outrages, espe-

cially on Christian travellers. We asked to see the heads, half doubting their reality, and on Giovanni's showing evident reluctance to obeying our wishes, we went out on the verandah to insist upon their being shown to us. Most reluctantly the Tartar went up to the loft and brought down a small sack, containing two of them.

He slowly drew out the first by its scalp lock, disclosing the shaven crown of a Mussulman, and a dark fierce looking face. The dead man's black beard and glaring eyes, the mingled expression of pain, cruelty, and ferocity; the sabre cut that crossed the cheek, and the agonized look, gave this bloody trophy a most ghastly appearance. The other heads were all dreadfully mutilated by sabre cuts, and the faces shockingly disfigured. Iovon bore back the grim proof of Turkish justice, and we returned to our breakfast.

The horses soon after made their hoofs

ring upon the stones of the court-yard, and passing through a crowd of smoking and indolent Ottoman soldiers, we followed the Tartar to the gate. Two troopers were mounted to accompany us, and the state of the road rendered an escort doubly necessary. One was a strong young dragoon in a red tarboosh, heavily armed, and with a long gun slung at his back. The other was a man of five-and-forty, of a very agile and tiger-like figure, and a bold resolute countenance; a more perfect Osmanlee never yet drew sword.

He wore a small red turban, a loose green jacket with crimson trousers and slippers. His horse was handsome, a fiery chesnut barb, as spirited as his rider, whose graceful and exquisite horsemanship, his frequent bounds and starts showed off to great advantage.

The Saracens of old must have been

such men as that, and no wonder those fierce and tameless children of the Desert gave some trouble even to the Frankish Crusaders, sheathed in mail and plate armour.

We stopped at a small but very pretty hamlet of two or three houses only, about four hours from Sarkjee. It being early, we set off by ourselves, and leaving our people at the cabin where we were to sleep, we scrambled up a wooded mountain, on whose ridge was an old cemetery, and from whose summit a fine view could be commanded. Iovon shouted lustily to us not to go, but we never heeded him.

We found Turkish trousers not to be the best equipment for cragsmen, and therefore on descending, we crossed the village bridge, and walked some way along the banks of the stream. At last we sat down on a mass of rough grey rocks, and looked alternately at the rushing and swift water and

at the rude black hills, in whose savage and but half explored wilds roamed the wolf and the bear, and—more terrible and barbarous still—men of bloody hands and merciless hearts. The ruffianly gang of men whose comrades' heads we had seen in the morning, lurked somewhere among these very mountains, in which was hidden many a pitiless barbarian, made an outlaw by fanaticism, slaughter, and crime.

These Turkish robbers seldom maltreated Moslem travellers, but Greeks and Jews were constantly their victims, and we knew as Christians what mercy we might expect at the hands of these savage infidels, in whose eyes an unbelieving Giaour is an unclean thing.

As we sat beside the stream, a large herd of cattle passed us, which were being driven into the hamlet for shelter. It is a fearful proof of the insecurity of life and property

in this unhappy country, that no man dares to leave his cattle in the fields at night,—the presence of the outlawed marauders lies like a heavy curse upon the land.

The short twilight began to wane rapidly away, giving place to darkness, when two women, who were passing on the rocks above, caught sight of me, as I stood by the grey stone, smoking my chibouque, and mistaking me for an armed Turk among the stones by the stream, they took to flight in great dismay.

We soon turned homewards, and were about to cross a little torrent by means of the stepping-stones, when we heard a deep voice call out something in Turkish. Turning round, we saw a man in the Moslem garb, armed, appear from under the shadow of some bushes. His air, his actions, his very turban, all seemed of a highly suspicious character, and when he rushed forward,

pistol in hand, we at once set him down for an Osmanli Robin Hood.

I had left my pistols at my saddle-bow, but I turned to confront him with my yataghan. Emily, too, had her dagger. Had he had no fire-arms I should have cared but little ; but these fellows are never without them. Besides, I could not suppose that any robber would have the audacity to venture up to a village, alone and unsupported. The fellow came nearer, and I recognized—the elder trooper of the two—Osmanli, that formed our escort!

He had been out to look for us, and almost immediately after he joined us, the other soldier, with Giovanni and sundry natives bearing lanterns, met us.

But never did man scold as that same green-jacketed Turk did. He screamed, he shouted, he drew his sword, he pointed to his neck with a most significant gesture, and

harangued us bitterly, bursting into a torrent of indignant eloquence, that forbade or silenced reply. He declared that he was responsible for our lives, that the mountains swarmed with robbers,—that murders took place constantly,—and that our unheard-of rashness in venturing among the favourite haunts of the banditti deserved the severest reprehension, and I thought that if it did, it decidedly got its due. I have seldom seen a man so angry; and as the more he scolded, the more Emily, struck with the absurdity of the thing, laughed at his vehemence, I thought there would be no end to the scene.

At last when we reached our cabin, the whole population joined in the chorus of vociferation, and the old soldier looked really concerned, and was quite unhappy until he saw us mount our ladder, and take our places

in the balcony or verandah which ran round the house.

Still the worthy infidel trooper was discontented, and walked up and down in the road below, mounting guard over us most assiduously, and menacing us from time to time with his sabre and pistol, in case we made another attempt to elude his vigilance. At last Iovon who had been absent all this time preparing our supper, returned with a large bowl of roast mutton, we were left in peace to eat our supper.

We occupied the whole of the little hut, which we barricaded as well as we could. Our attendants, civil and military, slept on a wooden platform below, very near the house, and fronting the road through the village.

Next day we met many straggling soldiers, all horsemen belonging to the cavalry regiment of Turkish Sewarri, whose green tents

and picquetted horses we had seen among the turbaned tombstones of the Sarkjee cemetery.

Part of our route lay through a terrific mountain pass; a narrow defile, winding among giant walls of rock for the most part inaccessible.

It had a shallow, but rugged torrent flowing down it, which we had to cross no less than eighteen times. Two or three men with rifles on the heights, might have picked us off with ease, and even crushed us by rolling down masses of rock. For an ambuscade, no better place could ever have been found.

Our Osmanlee guards now and then enlivened the march by galloping off at full speed, and with wild shouts brandishing a gun or pipe-stick over their heads, while wheeling and turning, they performed the Mameluke exercise. In this, the elder of

the two was very conspicuous. His graceful figure and perfect horsemanship, as he swept about on his chesnut barb, turning and wheeling like a bird on the wing, must have charmed the most careless and indifferent eye.

We stopped for dinner where the houses were all Turkish. We were, therefore, unable to get admittance, and our mattresses were spread under a shady verandah. It was a thoroughly Mussulman hamlet, with its ruinous mosques, its turban-crowned peasants, its cool bubbling fountains and waving trees.

No English village can equal a Turkish one in its supply of shade and fresh water. But the only trees in the country are those thickly planted about the dwellings of men, and filled with the nests of the sacred stork; while the limpid element gushes pure and fresh from twenty marble fountains, on each

of which a pious Arabic inscription, usually in blue, green, and gold letters, bids the devout pilgrim thank Allah and his prophet for the grateful draught.

In this country of thirsty deserts, this land of scorching sun, such a supply of liquid crystal is indeed a precious boon to the wayfarer. Many large, wolfish-looking dogs prowled about the village, growling fiercely at each other; but cowed by the step of a human being, became the veriest curs. We rode on once more after our repast of mountain mutton, the bagpipes of the goatherds sounding from the pastures on either hand. We saw two caravans encamped, beside whose tents and tilted waggons stood or knelt several hundred camels. Soon after we met a party of riders, driving some of these animals before them.

Horses are often afraid of camels, and some of ours refused to face them. Emily's

steed, in particular, pranced, bounded, flung up his heels, spun round and twisted himself about more like an eel than a horse, to my great admiration, and to the intense horror of Giovanni, who screamed like a Bedlamite, and in the Neapolitan dialect yelled to "that *maladetto Tartar*" to take away the no less accursed camels.

Many a muddy ditch and deep stream, many a treacherous morass and miry pool were waded and leapt ere we gained the summit of a hill, from which we could faintly distinguish in the hazy distance the white minarets of Sophia. Many a weary mile did we ride across the boundless *maidan*, or large flat plain, before we reached it.

It is peculiarly worthy of notice, that almost all Turkish towns are built on an immense table-land, so that you see them for hours ere you can gain their shelter;

and thus you toil on, now over a sandy waste, now through a miry swamp, while the mosques and spires, to which you never seem to get any nearer, appear actually to mock you. It has the effect of a perfect mirage. It was dark when we approached the walls, and Emily was as tired as any lady of ancient or modern times, having been nearly twelve hours on horseback.

A soldier was giving Iovon, beside whom he rode, an animated description of a skirmish in which the troops had been somewhat worsted by the rebels or banditti, when I saw the Suridgee plunge, as I thought, off a high bank into a deep pond. I found it to be the bank of a small river, about four of which we waded, and were then joined by a most thievish-looking rascal, on a powerful horse.

On we went, now splashing through streams, now struggling through mud, now

climbing up steep banks, until we crossed an old bridge or two, broken and dangerous, entered a hollow way screened by tall hedges, thick and dark as Nox and Erebus, and found ourselves in the most gloomy and muddy lane in Heathenesse.

CHAPTER VII.

THE streets of Sophia are some of them tolerably wide indeed. Most Turkish towns are better in this respect than Constantinople ; and those travellers who have only seen Imperial Stamboul can ill judge of the appearance of other Ottoman cities, deeper buried in Paynim land. But these same streets of Sophia abound in little hillocks and quagmires, and pools of water, and exhibit a sovereign contempt of level, most truly Mussulman.

Moreover, here and there are placed rows of huge stone posts, set upright in the ground and reaching across the street for the discouragement of wheel-carriages doubtless, and such like infidel machines. A horse does not squeeze himself between the said dwarf pillars too easily, and often makes his rider's stirrup ring against them in the dark.

The roofs of Sophia also are much better fitted to screen turbaned smokers from the sun's rays, when established at their thresholds, than to promote the comfort of equestrians, whose heads bump against their projecting eaves very inconveniently, and it is easy to break your bones, one way or other, on entering that fair city, especially by night.

After a long time spent in threading a labyrinth of lanes, we stopped before the

door of a mean wooden house, and knocked loudly until the gates were opened, when we rode under the dark, gloomy archway, and alighted. But I, to whose dreams from infancy Sophia had always presented itself as a stately city abounding in marble halls, morisco palaces, and bubbling fountains, was rather disgusted with the sight of the large dismal room into which we had ridden, with its earthen floor with a crazy wooden bench running round it, a stable opening out of it, and a miscellaneous crowd of drinking cups and flagons that proclaimed it a *café*. I therefore told Iovon that he must positively find us a better resting-place. He flung himself on his horse again, told us to wait his return, and carried the whole party off with him, excepting Emily and myself.

The Greeks, to whom the house belonged,

shut the wooden gates, and then, after vainly trying to tempt us up-stairs, not evidently understanding the transaction, and vexed at being kept up so late, harangued us in Turkish and Romaic with an angry and Demosthenic eloquence that made Emily laugh heartily, in spite of her extreme fatigue and exhaustion.

Their indignation grew intense; the proprietor and three other Greeks walked about vociferating violently and getting so furious that it seemed as if they meant either to eject or imprison us. It was natural that they should be surprised at our sitting there silently and immovably, without either going to bed, ordering anything to drink, or taking our departure.

The more they stormed the more Emily seemed struck with the ridicule of our position, while the Greeks, who could see nothing ludicrous in the matter, looked as

if they longed to beat her ; and I verily believe they would have proceeded to violent measures had I not amused them by constantly beating the Devil's tattoo on the hilt of my yataghan. One fellow stood opposite to me with a great stick, and seemed to be trying to screw up his courage to play the bully, but Hellenes seldom love danger, and I suppose he thought my broad blue Koran-lettered blade was more than a match for a Bulgarian club, to say nothing of the difference between a Frank and a Greek Rayah.

We stayed a long time, listening to the tramp of horses and hearing only curs and wild dogs baying in the stillness of the night. At last, as we were growing rather anxious, Giovanni came back with only the Suridgee, and said the Tartar was gone up to the house of the Governor with the

soldier. Another quarter of an hour, and Iovon's horse's hoofs rang on the pavement.

The Governor, he said, was asleep ; nobody dared to awaken him, and without his orders he could not get admittance to any private house, as the Mussulmen at Sophia were far too fanatic to admit us, and all the Christians' houses were more dirty and uncomfortable than the one we were in. Having said this, and before we could stop him, he wheeled his horse, and rode off to the palace to try the effect of another application, clattering along the silent streets like a squadron of cavalry.

But it was of no use ; the Governor could not be disturbed, and as the prisoners at Calcutta perished in one Black Hole because an Oriental despot was asleep, so were we committed to another for fear we

should break the slumbers of the Turkish officer.

We were quartered in a wretched little den of a matted chamber up-stairs, and then came another difficulty: we asked for milk and eggs, and were told there were none. I went down, stormed, promised, expostulated, but all to no purpose. A piece of kid's flesh, that would have sickened an Esquimaux, mouldy, tough, black bread, and cold water, were all the provisions attainable.

Few continental towns are very brilliantly lighted, and as for Sophia, I am willing to make affidavit that only two lights were visible in the entire city of mud huts, wood houses, stone mosques, and marble minarets; which cluster of buildings I will back for any reasonable wager to rival the African metropolis of Timbuctoo, in

their look of squalid, yellow, dusty barbarism.

Oxen, with dingy black hides, plentifully besmeared with mud; broad twisted horns *laid back* in the most remarkable and uncommon manner; singular, drooping ears and an expression of face which an humble artist might assign to the author of malignant evil,—even Old Nick himself,—stand in droves in the streets.

Packs of ferocious-looking, tawny-coloured dogs rove about the thoroughfares; savage-featured Moslems smoke before suspicious-looking *cafés*; and ragged Dervishes and Faqueers, a strange mixture of saint, ruffian, thief, and beggar, wander about, singing verses of the Koran in a strange nasal key. Glass panes are rare in the windows—wooden cross-bars for the day, and *paper* shutters for the night, being the more popular substitutes.

We left the town the evening after we arrived, riding slowly through the crowded streets, and emerging through the gate that opens into one of the four great burial-grounds through which the road winds for some distance. We also saw several small private ones in the distance, dotted about the plain.

These Turkish cemeteries present a most dismal and quaint appearance to the stranger, and, being often of immense extent, look like very Necropolies. The grim forests of turbaned tombstones and jagged pillars of white marble and brown-grey stone, can be compared to nothing but the irregular and broken teeth of an ancient village dame; while the few dusty cypresses, Moslem sepulchres, wave over lazy packs of dogs, lean as jackals and gaunt as wolves.

The tombs and sculptured turbans are

frequently adorned with red, blue, or green paint, and are usually covered with Arabic inscriptions. Some few, that cover rich devotees, are splendidly gilt and Koran-lettered; and here and there a superb mausoleum of pure and snowy marble, fenced off by a gilt-knobbed iron railing, marks the spot

“Where sleeps as true an Osmanlee,
As ere at Mecca bent the knee.”

They are sadly mournful spots, with a few black goats, and wretched sheep browsing on the stunted herbage, while ravens and crows are perched like a crest on the stone fezzes of the monuments.

We continued our march over the great Maidan of Sophia, a huge sable mountain on our right hand, on whose ridge glittered wreaths of unsullied and defying snow,

whose sparkling purity was the only refreshing thing in the landscape. Precious stones are said to be found in the recesses of this mountain; but its ravines hid many a band of daring freebooters, and the eagle and vulture screamed wildly around its inaccessible peaks.

The heat had been intense; but evening was now rapidly advancing, and a storm of thunder and lightning raged in the hills that lay to our left. Darkness fell like a mantle over the land; and before long, we could see little except the ground under our horses' feet, and the red fires that marked the numerous caravans which had encamped on the vast plain.

An hour more brought us to a broad and rapid river, as wide, perhaps, as the Thames near Reading. Here we halted and sought, as far as the darkness would permit, for a

ford. The stream was swollen and the regular ford considered perilous. The soldier rode in a little way, but his heart failed him, and he returned shaking his head.

The scene was picturesque enough. The rushing river with its turbid waters and its fringe of dark trees, the ruddy camp-fires, the gloomy mountains, and our own party, were all seen by the broad bright flashes that lit up the night for a moment, to double the darkness by contrast when they disappeared. A shout or two came occasionally down the breeze, and we could now and then catch a glimpse of a grey horse and another steed careering the Maidan at a distance behind us; but whether mounted or not no one could tell.

We turned to the left, and forced our way through a deep osier copse, bursting with difficulty through the tangled branches,

and gaining a beaten path or track which led to another ford. Here was an aruba, or bullock-cart, drawn by four oxen, waiting to cross the stream. The ford was a dangerous one, and it was a long time before the Suridgee would try it. But at last the Tartar got very angry, and he rode in, and returned to announce that it was practicable, if the exact line were preserved with due precision, it being difficult to avoid the deep holes and irregularities of the river.

I tried to cross the first; but the whole gang of Turks made such a diabolical row, that I gave it up in despair. Nobody seemed willing to take the lead, until at last the post of danger was assigned to the unfortunate driver of bullocks, who was most unwillingly forced to head the party.

80 But, before we commenced wading, the Suridgee jumped off his horse and began un-

buckling the halter of Emily's steed, in order to lead her across, while the soldier approached to push her feet more firmly into the broad-shovel stirrups, that she might have a firm seat, in case the horses should have to swim. A series of well-applied kicks dislodged the military hero from his place at the lady's feet ; but the Suridgee was less easily got rid of.

Up came the Tartar, too, while I remained, too much amused to expostulate, addressing her in the coaxing terms by which men soothe a refractory child ; and ejaculating in his pretty broken German, "No, good madam ; no, good madam," tried in his turn to lead her steed. But in vain ; for, flourishing her long lashed whip threateningly, she exclaimed, with the utmost energy, "Ich will nicht, ich will nicht ;" at the same time jerking the rope of her horse's

halter so indignantly out of the hands of the exceedingly well-meaning but officious Suridgee, that he gave up his attempt in wondering despair, and evidently would as soon have tried to lead an enraged lioness, as renew his attack upon Emily's freedom.

No further impediment offering itself, we at length dashed in, like a flock of wild geese, in line. The lightning-flashes at intervals showed our position, and flung a glare upon the turbid and darkly-stained water which we were struggling through, half wading, half swimming.

The river was broad and the night was dark ; the stream was swift as a mill-race, so that the horses were swept down the current below the landing-place in spite of all their struggling, and it needed their whole strength, with much careful guiding,

to prevent them from being borne away altogether.

I tried once to take a line of my own ; but they, one and all, screamed out something about deep water, and I prudently remembered that Turkish trowsers would be heavy odds against swimming. Our people kept up the most appalling yells and cries imaginable, which we could only hope were useful in keeping off all water sprites and evil spirits : they certainly mingled well with the rushing ripple of the angry stream, and the frequent bellowing of the crashing thunder.

The river was crossed, the opposite bank surmounted, and we were speedily in the hamlet where we intended to sleep. An empty house was hastily swept and assigned to us ; the verandah outside was appropriated by Iovon, and a loft by Giovanni,—while

the soldier and Suridgee were quartered elsewhere.

Giovanni, honest man! had picked up three words or so of Turkish or Servian, "Eymer" (some),—"Neenar" (none),—and "Napolé" (out of doors);—and he ran about among the natives, repeating over and over again his eternal three words, meaningless enough in the way he used them, but which he evidently found a most amusing occupation, laughing always immoderately at his own wit. The natives evidently took him either for a fool or a madman, and respected his infirmity accordingly. I fancy they were not very far wrong in their supposition. Iovon as usual slept like a gigantic watchdog beneath our window,—a bundle of hay forming his pillow, and his arms hanging within his reach.

In the morning, a crowd of savage-look-

ing women and girls blocked our door, and darkened our window with their faces, staring at us unrebuked, while we performed our hasty toilette and swallowed our frugal repast. We were gazed at like wild beasts in their den at feeding time. These things can only be laughed at. *Venetian blinds* are unknown here!

We gave a bottle of unutterably nasty pink rosolio, bought at Sophia, to the most thoroughly savage of the—I cannot say *fair*—bevy, and she returned with a bouquet of marigolds as a recompense.

In the middle of the day we stopped at a place called Glioubian, where there was a fair going on. Great crowds of people, mostly Christian peasants, with a thin sprinkling of Moslems, were assembled, and the scene was one of a very animated character. Buying and selling I saw but little of; but

of the true old-fashioned boorish dance on the green there was enough to gladden the heart of a lover of May-day games.

Some hundreds of country people, barbarous and wild in manners, strange and uncouth in speech, but happy and good-humoured, had formed large rings by linking hands, and were dancing merrily and vigorously to the rudest and most primitive music that quaint guitars, mandolins, and shrill bagpipes could utter. The men wore usually a coarse blue dress, heavy sandals, and an eternal black fur cap, or muchka, resembling nothing so much as a huge dirty sponge.

The women had a far more showy as well as costly attire. It in some measure resembled the Tyrolese dress, and consisted of a white and red under-petticoat, a black boddice and shirt, scarlet and white loose

hanging sleeves, red apron and shoes to match, and a broad belt with immensely large and heavy silver or gilt clasps and plates to fasten it. They wore strings of beads round their necks, and sometimes sequins replaced the beads.

A golden sequin was often suspended by a single thread wire between their eyes, in the centre of their foreheads; their hair in front was most carefully plaited, and adorned with huge crowns of scarlet cloth and silver or gilt brass plates, made in a crescent form, and wreathed with red and yellow flowers, whose bright tints and gaudy hues contrasted strongly with the wearers' swarthy features.

Down their backs streamed two broad tails of plaited hair, reaching usually to their feet, eked out with ribbon to match the hair, when that was too short, and the whole covered, literally from *head to foot*, with

silver coins of every size, from the Spanish dollar to the Turkish piastre. This of course depended on the wealth of the wearer, as every girl carries her dowry thus on her hair, and the value and weight of many of these appendages must have been considerable. One belle, in particular, had two enormous tails that blazed with silver coins of the largest size, and she even exhibited a few golden ones besides. An expert London pickpocket, with a pair of scissors as sharp as himself, might have reaped a glorious—a golden harvest at Glioubian.

We could not help observing how much better the men danced than the women, in spite of their clumsy appearance. Here and there stood a red-capped or white-turbaned Moslem calmly smoking his chibouque, unheeding the rude strains of the discordant clang which called itself music, or the

boisterous merriment of the dancers. The haughty infidel stood amid the black-bonneted peasants a conqueror among slaves.

We saw all this from the verandah of the police-station, where we dined, waited on by Iovon and a handsome young Albanian in a white kilt, with silver-covered pistols and bandeliers, and were regaled with chickens and eggs, execrable Turkish coffee, and pure water. Salads are very common at a Moslem repast, and I am sure the Osmanlee look upon a cucumber or a lettuce as we do on a melon or a pine-apple.

The soldiers—many of them finely made Turks, and superbly armed—smoked at the other end of the verandah, and regarded us with grave composure and polite curiosity. Presently, in came a black-bearded dignitary, a Spahi, doubtless, or feudal proprietor, followed by half-a-dozen horsemen, all armed

to the teeth. He wore a high shawl turban and a red hood, and was a remarkably fierce looking fellow, quite a Moslem Don Quixote.

He bowed very civilly to us, gave his horse to a servant of his retinue, came up-stairs, where the Turkish soldiers came to welcome him, sat down, stared at us, smoked a pipe, drank a cup of coffee, and then bowed again very gravely and rode off at the head of his train of vassals. Such are the country gentlemen of Turkey.

When we went away—after giving a fruit and money scramble to the children—the dances were suspended, and the people crowded to see us mount. Poor Giovanni was involved in a string of dancers, which he dared not break; he therefore remained in the charmed circle until the all-powerful magician, Iovon, rescued him. We slept at

Tuterman, and the next day set out tolerably early.

The Suridgee was an old white-bearded Osmanlee, with a venerable face and an awful turban, that looked as if its owner deserved some much more dignified employment than leading a baggage-horse. But the Turkish peasants, whenever you meet them, driving sheep or employed in field labour, look most completely out of place, with their loose, showy, picturesque garb, and fine, bold, noble faces. Besides, they always look as if they felt degraded, as a nomadic and warrior people, by the toils of agriculture.

The Suridgees are often Zingaree, Mangraubins, or Turkish gipsies—a swarthy, thievish, intelligent, turbaned race, who differ much in animation and cowardice from the brave but indolent Osmanlees. They

affect to be Mussulmen, and speak a dialect of bad Turkish or Tartar ; thus preserving fewer national characteristics of the Gitano among the intolerant Mussulmen than among the milder Christians. I have vainly spoken to them in pure Hindustani and in the Dakkhani dialect—a language most of their tribe in Europe can partially understand.

A mounted Bulgarian peasant, with three loose horses in charge, added himself unasked to the party, grinning with delight at finding good company and protection where he least expected it. The road was one of the worst in Turkey, being simply the clefts channelled by the water of various torrents in the living rock—now ascending, now descending. We passed over some rugged and difficult mountains, whose range divides the fruitful but barbarous province of Bulgaria from the imperial, but sandy and barren, district of Roumelia.

Mount Athos

These watercourses were narrow, and steep, and slippery, with the shallow, thread-like streams that trickled down them—too narrow for two horses to pass along them abreast, and often filled with huge masses of broken rock which had to be scrambled and climbed over, while the boughs of the thorny trees and acacias overhead arched them in a manner which sometimes rendered them nearly dark.

CHAPTER VIII.

OUR journey was a most fatiguing one until we reached the summit of the mountain. On the way we had passed a party of straggling troopers of the police cavalry, and we now came to a station of these soldiers, perched, like an eagle's eyrie, on a projecting crag, where, on showing our talismans, two Arnauts on foot, and one on horseback, joined us.

Down the pass we went, slowly tracing our course over the slippery rocks and loose

stones, and entering the jaws of a terrific gorge of great depth and thickly wooded, at the bottom of which murmured a sullen stream. Presently our escort passed us, laughing gaily and good-humouredly, and bounded down the rocky defile with the light-footed agility of Alpine goats.

Two were foot-soldiers in the showy Albanian garb, with blue jackets which had Maltese crosses in embroidery, so ingeniously worked as, I suppose, to be unperceived by their Mussulman wearers; voluminous sashes, white kilts, scarlet greaves, and high red caps, with purple tassels. A long musquet slung at the back, a richly mounted yataghan, a dagger, silver bandoliers, and a pair of long pistols, blazing with frosted silver, completed their equipment.

The white-petticoated horseman was a

tall, dark, gloomy man, armed to the teeth, and in the manner which marks the petty officers of this irregular corps. He had a long-barrelled, slender, beautifully enamelled gun slung across his shoulder; a brass-mounted and a silver-mounted yataghan lay in his sash, from which hung a dangling handjar by its thong, in company with some bones of chased silver, for ammunition and tobacco. Two very large and superb pistols, heavily plated with frosted silver, graced his belt,—which would probably have been worth some twenty pounds in Stamboul,—and a brass-mounted pair shewed their glancing butts from his holsters. He bowed respectfully in passing, then dismounted, and led his charger down the steep rock, preceded by his foot comrades.

The soldiers were very willing to escort *us*, but they pointed significantly to their

pipes when the peasant, with his three horses, availed himself of their protection; and the man, understanding the signal, gave them some small coin, that he might not be driven from the shadow of our wing; this being a tribute, by the way, which the Turkish soldiers invariably levy in money or tobacco, on every Christian boor they chance to meet.

In this glen it was that the skirmish had ensued in which the four robbers had fallen, whose heads we had seen at Sarkjee; and here the soldiers had interrupted the banditti in the midst of their bloody massacre. The four remaining ruffians had escaped up the sides of the wooded defiles, where pursuit must have been nearly hopeless.

At the foot of the hill, our petticoated warriors left us, fully satisfied with what appeared to them a liberal backsheesh of a

piastre a-piece ; and a bearded Turk, heavily armed, took their place as our protector.

The Albanians were the most active troops I had seen in the Ottoman Empire ; but they are said to be most undisciplined and disorderly soldiers, hardly amenable to any law whatever.

We were refused shelter from the mid-day sun in a little Turkish village further on, where all the people were followers of Mahomet ; but we could not help stopping to dine at the first Christian hut we reached, poor and miserable though it was. We at length reached our sleeping-place, a small hamlet of houses like beehives, lying within hedged and dog-guarded patches of garden-ground.

Iovon fixed upon a house, showed his teskiri, and summoned the owners to make rendition in virtue of the pleasure of the

Pacha of Nissa, backed by the edict of the Governor of Sophia. But the house was garrisoned by two ladies of a certain age, grim of look, fiery of eye, unrivalled in power and activity of tongue; and no dragon ever sallied forth more fiercely from his mountain-home on the Drachenfels, to oppose the invasion of crested Rhinegrave or mail-clad Paladin, than did these female furies issue from their den to oppose our incursion. The clatter and storm of words they raised was more than the valour of mere mortal man could cope with. Iovon and the turbaned soldier, bold enough, doubtless, amid leaden bullets and steel sword-blades, were, however, mere "men of mould" after all, and could not hope to face such weapons as women's tongues, far, far more dreadful than the yataghan and the petronels.

We retreated in vast confusion, harrassed by the enemy, and at last found a house where the people were sullen, but passive, and where the organs of speech of the fair sex were gifted with less volubility of utterance. The room we occupied was not lofty, it is true, for a man of ordinary stature could not stand upright beneath its roof, and the door was certainly not four feet high; but it was embellished with fantastic daubs of paintings, representing various Greek saints, also with fringes and tassels of Indian corn, and, as usual, various articles of dress and arms. The window was about a foot square, and closed with a wooden slide.

Our dinner consisted, as usual, of a couple of wretched fowls, more than half starved, and a great piece of coarse black bread. The Turks can always give you

salt and red pepper; but they are too often pleased to mix alum, or some other most intolerably bitter drug, with the one, and the bark of some tree, rasped into powder, with the other, which is *not* cayenne.

We walked out, bayed at every step we took by a number of great dogs, who showed the most cowardly ferocity; while the soldier, who thought it his duty to follow us, cursed the whole canine race with uncalled-for officiousness.

The women of the village kept perpetually crowding our door-way, and staring at us like so many savages. The only mode of getting rid of them was by pushing them unceremoniously away.

Near Tatar Bazardchick we saw numbers of those circular mounds of earth, called burrows in England, which hide the bones of many a heathen warrior. What reason

to give for such cairns or tumuli existing in the midst of the plains of Thrace, is a less easy matter ; but as we are told that the Norse, Saxon, and Danish Vi-Kings frequently visited the Levant on their piratical expeditions, we may suppose a body of these fair-haired rovers of the North to have sailed up the river to Adrianople, and to have fought a battle here on their march towards Sophia, which caused some of these martial exiles to lay their bones beneath the Thracian sands.

In good truth I pitied them heartily,—those blue-eyed wanderers of the Northern seas, for finding a last sleeping-place in the arid soil of Turkey, unfanned by the fresh breeze that sweeps along the straits of Elnore, or whistles by the Strager Rack. Doubtless, their ghosts, as Ossian would say, cannot rest in their narrow houses in Rou-

melia, but wrap themselves often in the grey mantle of the storm, and follow the sinking sun in viewless march to Lochlin's cloudy lakes, and hills of wind.

Tatar Bazardchick is a holy city in miniature, crested with numbers of slender minarets, and studded with the round-domed snowy mosque of the Moslem worship. We were housed in a very large ruinous old Khan, with a painting of St. George or St. Michael over the outer gate. It was pretty full of people, and being built in a semi-circular form, was a fine specimen of the old Caravanseraï of the Arabian Nights.

We had a very tolerable room, with a wooden divan on which we spread our mattresses, six windows, and a stone pitcher of water. I had almost forgotten the only

article of furniture, which was a table about the size of a music-stool.

We had a tolerably good dinner ; but were very much annoyed by some Greek children, in a house whose window commanded ours, and who finished their aggression by throwing a brickbat through the window with unerring aim, and much to the disparagement of the dinner equipage. Iovon rushed out into the street, fury in his eyes and a long stick in his hand ; but caught no luckless offender to wreak his vengeance upon.

At night we walked about the corridor enjoying the scene, which was both picturesque and oriental. The court-yard below was enveloped in perfect darkness, save where, here and there, was seen the red gleam of a watch-fire, round which soldiers or travelling merchants reposed,

and the gallery was a strange mixture of darkness and light.

One venerable old Turk, dressed in flowing dark robes, with a very large grey beard and a very ponderous white turban, was seated in front of a brazier of live coals, and seemed to occupy himself in some goldsmith's work. Another, a rich, irreligious old dog of a Mussulman, was seated on a divan amid a blaze of light, a band of Ryah musicians making an ear-splitting noise for his especial delectation, his narghilly tube in one hand and, alas! alas! a flagon of the forbidden beverage of the infidel in the other. A huge pitcher of red wine stood beside him,—stuff to which, as Thackeray well remarks, small beer would be nectar; so acid and yet so muddy, that it might have disgusted a swine, and yet the old sinner's eyes gleamed with delight

at his unhallowed revels. These were all in the gallery up-stairs.

All the *gens* of the Khan waited upon this worthy gentleman with great attention and servility, while we walked along the half-lit passages, gazed on the groups who sat or lay in our path, clad in all the varying picturesqueness of the flowing Oriental garb, musing on the mysterious youth of the East, and thinking of the caliph of caliphs, the defender of the people, the ubiquitous merchant of Moussul, Haroun Alraschid the Good.

The road from Tatar Bazardchick is tolerably practicable for carriages of an infrangible nature, and we accordingly hired a vetturino. But never was such a Lohn-Kutcher turned out before from Paris, Vienna, or Florence, and such a vehicle who ever beheld?

The driver, old Hussein, or Suleiman, whichever his name might have been, was a man of a large bulky form, with a set of features formed to express the sentiments of fear and wonder only. His beard would have been in perfect keeping on the portrait of a patriarch. His waist was encircled by a heavy shawl, whose immense rolls were in turn clasped round by a huge black leather belt, two feet broad in front, and dwindling to a mere thong behind. In this were stuck a knife and an enormous Turkish pistol, about the calibre of a small carabine. The fellow's turban was one of the most curious superstructures ever laid upon a human head. A white cotton skull-cap came first, drawn tightly over the shaven crown and single grim scalp-lock that marked the Moslem ; then *two* round crimson caps of coarse thick felt, and over them the great blue and white

shawl, wreathed and twisted into snaky folds.

As for the aruba, it was a kind of light tilted waggon—a covered country vehicle they called a zelica, without springs, and clumsy wheels, without any iron to guard their edges. The roof was of straw matting, covered with an awning of white canvass, adorned with Arabesque sentences.

The carpet-bags and saddles were put at the back of the zelica. Giovanni was extremely anxious, doubtless from *purely disinterested motives*, to leave the latter behind, on economical principles; but I could not, for the life of me, see how placing two real Turkish machines of leather and lath behind a waggon could possibly occasion any one to “*faire une dépense*,” as the worthy individual himself would say.

Our mattresses were spread on the floor

of the cart. Giovanni seated himself beside the Mohammedan driver, and away we went, at about three miles and a half an hour. Iovon still rode with a Suridgee beside him. From habit, the Tartar becomes so absolute a centaur, that it is as difficult to divorce him from his saddle as from his wife—perhaps more so.

We did not find the road equal to an English highway, certainly ; and the passage of a small river, seemed likely to be as fatal to us, as that of Inachus to the Argive king. The opposite bank was steep and slippery ; the mud, as well as the water, deep ; and the strong grey horses vainly strove and toiled to drag the zelica on dry land.

Some reapers—peasants in sheepskin caps—who were working in the marsh, were called on to aid us : they refused to come, but Iovon galloped among them, gesticulating

furiously ; and, as they were Christians, his long-lashed whip and grim looks forced the frightened agriculturists to lay down their sickles and leave their work, to help us. Giovanni had got to the bank, out of harm's way.

We sat in silent grandeur and dignity, awaiting the moment when we should either be safe on *terra firma*, or smothered beneath the aruba, in the thick, black, slimy mud of which the river's bed consisted. Never did Moslemah sit with more composure under the fire of a Giaour battery.

The bipeds who had been pressed into our service took off their sandals, and trudged very sulkily into the water, labouring together to lift the ponderous machine—the driver uttering the most piteous shrieks to his steeds, whom he encouraged by the names of “Ibrahim” and “Suleiman,” in the tone

of a stage father declaiming to and imploring his unnatural and wayward children. The reapers yelled dismally; the horses floundered and splashed, and tugged and kicked, and plunged and sat down in the water, to admiration; and, in short, went through evolutions not to be surpassed by any horses ever trained by Ducrow, Franconi, or their English rival, Batty.

Many times we were nearly capsized, and as often the waggon was in the most imminent peril of being separated into its component elements, when at length, with a dislocating jolt, we flew over the bank, and were on firm, solid earth again.

We reached Philippopoli early. The situation of this town, built as it is upon the side of a rocky eminence, is very beautiful and striking; and its white buildings and graceful minarets are very elegant and

refreshing to the eye, wearied with gazing on the great parched maidan, whose desert wastes reach from the mountain frontier of fruitful Bulgaria to the Golden Gate of the Imperial Stamboul.

But the rice plantations and swamps make Philippopoli, with all its beauty, a dangerous place for strangers, and one of the towns that enjoy the most perilous climate of this fatal region. Before we had been there long, Giovanni complained of a violent headache, and went to lie down.

We were lodged in the house of a mad Greek, where we had a very comfortable carpeted room, with a well-cushioned divan round it. The English Vice-Consul, a Corfiote or Zandiote Greek, named Zuccolo, and, as we afterwards discovered, a consummate swindler, came to call on us, with

a number of other "*Englishmen*," as they called themselves. They were all subjects of Britain, doubtless; but it is startling to hear a man in a red fez, without having a drop of English blood in his veins, or knowing a syllable of the language, claim one for a countryman.

There was a doctor among them, who pronounced Giovanni to have caught the fever of the country. I thought the poor fellow would have died of fright when he heard it. His teeth chattered, and his face assumed the ghastly expression of one already defunct, and who had been a great coward in life and died of terror. His attack of fever was a trifle when compared with one I afterwards had at Constantinople; but his fears magnified it beyond description.

He went to bed; the doctor promised to

cure him by next day, and Iovon got us our dinner from a Turkish restaurant, and grinned with intense delight to see that we did not partake of the antipathies of those delicately-sensitive travellers, who complain of the horrors of eating a dish of smoking hot kabobs without *forks*. Certainly, no man in Turkey is born with a silver spoon in his mouth; but many may lay claim to the wooden one.

What a pity that we do not know how to make sherbet in the West; nothing equals its refreshing and snowy coolness in hot weather.

The reports of the roads were not encouraging; every part of the maidan was scoured by parties of four or five robbers, mounted in the plains, but on foot among the hills; and the terrible Zohrab Khan, he redoubted robber-chief, lent the *éclat* of

his name to the tales of marauding banditti. The heads of two freebooters had been cut off, and paraded on spears about the town of Philippopoli a few days before, and examples were very common.

In Roumelia, I saw round every fire there were lying a number of small iron tongs, of peculiar shape; these are to pick out live coals, to illumine a chibouque. If any one wished to light a pipe in the street, he has only to hold it up to some shop or cafégee's window, and a piece of burning charcoal is dropped into the bowl at once. In Turkey, people light each other's pipes, much as in Muscovy they rub each other's noses.

CHAPTER IX.

THE next day it was agreed that we should leave Giovanni in the doctor's hands, to be cured and sent on with a Suridgee or a caravan, and go on ourselves at once. Our mad host presented us with a bottle of fine lettar-gul, and seemed delighted with a gold breast-pin we gave him ; and we rolled away.

In the street, holding the hand of a Turkish woman, all yellow slippers, wrappings, and yashmach, was a little sylph-like girl, of about ten, a lovely little Eastern

fairy. The child was dressed in white and silver, with wide white hanging sleeves and rich laced ruffles; the whole dress gorgeous with silver embroidery. Her shawl was of a thin, gauzy, transparent stuff, and her head-dress was very strange and showy, being of Persian shawl, pink silk, roses, white and red, and a coronet or wreath of silver plates, like the diadem of an Indian Princess.

The road was rather better now, but still very rough. We dined one day in a cavalry barracks, from which a couple of superbly mounted soldiers, on chesnut barbs of pure desert or Turcoman blood, joined us. We passed through one exclusively Turkish village, which appeared quite deserted. Every one was asleep, and all the inhabitants were Mahometans. We could not expect any shelter from the sun. I insisted, however,

in going over a large round mosque, at a short distance.

It was but little decayed, and yet in a sad state of neglect ; the door closed up with a mass of nettles and rank grass, and with the owl, the spider, the snake and the scorpion, for dwellers in its deserted walls, save when marauders may hide their booty in its vaults, or their future crimes within the chambers of this desecrated place of Mussulman worship.

We went on to another village, where a tolerant true believer actually admitted us. More than that, the Turk brought us coffee, and with his hand on his heart presented it with one of those graceful bows which none but a native of the East can give. A French dancing-master might practise for years, without attaining the inborn grace of the humblest and meanest Oriental.

In the barrack where we slept the next night, we stood in the gallery in front of our room, and when it was dark, looked down upon the huge court-yard filled with camp-fires, round which lay groups of picturesque hardy soldiers, smoking, eating, singing, drinking coffee, or telling stories. Horses neighed or stamped around, parties of cavalry rode in frequently from their patrols or man-hunting expeditions, and there was much in the scene to charm a painter's eye.

The showy garb, and glittering arms of the turbaned soldiers, their bronzed, dark, bearded faces, their swarthy lineaments working with emotion at the tale or song going on, seen by the red glare of the watch-fire, were highly imposing. Most of the troopers were superbly armed, their weapons blazing with gold and silver, and the con-

trast was pleasing between the white kilt and high scarlet cap with its purple tassel of the Albanian klepht, and the extravagantly wide red trousers and heavy Turkish turban of the Osmanlee warrior. The Arnaut dress is probably the most elegant and handsome in the world, and is as peculiar to the West of Turkey as the petticoat trousers are to the East.

The journey over that immense maidan was very wearying ; but there was a sandy grandeur in its very monotony. Boundless and unbroken, the sandy desert stretched away, producing only here and there some parched brown grass, and now and then a few shrubs of the wild laurestinus. There are great plantations of thistles, however, many acres in extent, and that would make a donkey's paradise. Great numbers of

streams intersect it, but it was summer, and their beds were dry.

We met a troop of fierce and scowling horsemen, four or five savage looking fellows, poorly and shabbily dressed; gaunt, grim, and hungry as wolves, but loaded with arms. The quantity of weapons these gentry wore was amazing. Every man had two swords or yataghans, a pair of long pistols, with a goodly store of daggers and smaller knives, and often a gun or a spear besides.

Here was no disguise of profession, no hypocritical pretence of honesty, no mask of the civilized thief: no, these men were "Naiducks," one and all, robbers of the desert. We knew it well, and they knew it, and in their savage hardihood they were not ashamed to confess it. Here was none

of that shuddering, cowering homage of conscious guilt that vice pays to virtue among us,—none whatever. These outlawed and desperate robbers, men of bloody hands and merciless hearts, lifted their hardened brows and scowling eyes boldly to ours, glaring at us like savages on the war path.

They were always in troops of four and five: we were four men simply; two on horseback, one besides myself in the cart. They were better armed than we were; stronger in every respect, the Turkish driver being little better than a frightened old woman, the Suridgee but slightly armed; indeed, in the event of a row, I meant to have taken his long pistol from the driver's side, and given it to Emily, who would certainly have made a better use of it than the

poor frightened idiot himself could have done.

Iovon and I could scarcely hope to beat five men, although my trusty Tartar was a giant, hardy, powerful, and brave as a lion ; but I fancy the robbers reflected that it was but bad policy to fight, and lose men, when the Jews and Greek Rayahs were so easy a prey. They must have counted, too, on the certainty of their Pacha taking the most ample vengeance for the murder of a European ; and they were besides amused by the unwonted sight of Franks in the heart of their country, entertaining as they do a strange and superstitious fear of their strength and courage.

~~at~~ We met once a couple of lancers, bearing in triumph the black fur caps of two defeated marauders on their glittering spears.

When we approached Adrianople, we could almost have taken it for a shady forest village, embosomed as it is by cool and sheltering clusters of trees.

We passed over an immensely long bridge with its many arches of white stone, and the gleaming minarets and flashing roofs of the morisco-gilded domes burst upon our view. A thousand columns, white, slender, and graceful, rose above the city of Adrian, the stately rival of the Bride of the Bosphorus.

Sparkling minarets of pure and snowy marble, brightly polished and tapering, stood like palm trees beside the many splendid and vast domes of the imperial mosques, fretted, embossed, and studded with gold, now doubly gilded by the glorious sun. Some of the largest houses in Adrianople are huge wooden edifices, painted in the gaudiest and most glaring colours; a mix-

ture of blue, red, green and yellow, pink and white, like a gigantic wild beast show,—but such is Turkish taste. The streets are infamously paved, but bright with gay and rich costumes.

Melons and cucumbers, pumpkins and gourds, lie about, piled like shot in an ordnance yard. The people eat cucumbers as the English peasant would an apple, evidently considering them as fruit; and it is curious to see how often the little donkey, laden with these cool green vegetables, is stopped by eager customers.

The Khan was a great dusty, freshly-painted place, with a handsome *café* opposite, before which sat crowds of richly-dressed Turkish merchants, Osmanlee officers, and Greeks in European dress, smoking splendid narghillys with rich tubes, costly amber mouth-pieces and magnificent cut glass

water bottles, in which bubbled the cool and fragrant rose-water.

Our dinner that day, from the nearest Turkish restaurant, was very elegant and savoury. The Ottoman cuisine is anything but despicable; and its "kabobs" (pronounced tchabob), and rissoles match any French dishes that Verrey's or the Trois Frères can offer.

They were shoeing oxen in front of the Khan. The approved mode is to throw the great vicious-looking black brute on his back, with a wooden frame-work fastened on his four feet, so as to keep them steadily in the air, while the iron shoes are fastened on, in spite of the bellowing of the poor beast, who usually spends the time in roaring, like ten thousand bulls of Bashan.

The consul called and informed us that

the roads were very unsafe, in spite of the vigorous and energetic proceedings of the new Pacha, who had cut off fifty robbers' heads in the course of his government of seven weeks. He said that as far as he was concerned, he would not ride three hours' journey from the gates with any treasure, were he not well escorted. As usual, the dread of the desert country seemed to be the terrible Zohrab Khan, the king of the wild maidan.

Soon after we left Adrianople, at a village a few miles off, we saw some prisoners brought in by some cavalry, and went down to look at them. They sat on a wooden platform, heavily laden with clanking chains. They were four Rayahs, or Christian peasants, all young men, in black sheep-skin caps and coarse blue garb. A set of more wolfish, craven, savage-looking scoundrels, I

never saw. Their faces expressed a mean, brutal, cowardly ferocity.

One lad of eighteen, with long wild hair and a dark face, looked more courageous than the others, but with an expression of hardened guilt and reckless crime enough to make one shudder. They were all going to certain execution, we were told, as the Pacha would order them to be executed the instant they arrived at Adrianople, as men taken red-handed and in the fact.

They had been captured but a few miles off, but they looked dusty and weary enough. One was playing with the padlock that fastened his chain, and examining it with as much interest and curiosity as though he had never seen such a toy before.

Perhaps he never had. The peasantry are very ignorant here; it would have been better for him had he never beheld one.


The soldier who had taken them, a tall handsome Albanian, with a fine figure, a dark eagle's face, and the eye of a hawk, sat watching them as he smoked his pipe, with as much composure and satisfaction as a hunter who has bagged his two brace of hares. A strong cavalry guard was near; but as he smoked his chibouque and patted his prancing barb, he seemed fully able to have captured the whole gang single-handed. The police cavalry are generally picked soldiers, brave men and good horsemen, and they often ride out alone to hunt down the Rayah banditti.

The weather was exceedingly hot, and we stopped constantly to drink at the numerous stone fountains that Mahometan piety had erected in the desert waste. These fountains are of inestimable value on a long and weary march.

Between Karestan and Eska-baba I took a short cut across the plain on foot, and was surprised to see the clouds of locusts and grasshoppers that rose at every step. Turks never walk when they can ride, and regard it as an act of utter madness to use one's own limbs for purposes of volition, when those of any quadruped can be pressed into the service.

Old Suleiman, accordingly, did not at all comprehend my sudden start across the country, under a sun that would soon have cooked a beefsteak: he turned to Emily and piteously shook his grey beard with a most compassionate look, as much as to say, "Ah, poor thing, what will you do now? The Frank Bezzarda is possessed by some evil spirit that is driving him into the sea."

I found a gigantic locust up my sleeve,

when we reached our halting place, and could easily understand how St. John managed to live on such vast insects. 

Eska-baba is one of the prettiest towns, Turkish or Christian, that I ever saw. The vines of the purple south, trellised up the sides of the houses, arch over the streets with their cool green foliage: from noble old trees, great and shady-like forest patriarchs, are heard the flapping wings and clashing bills of the sacred storks, great numbers of which privileged birds fly around the mosques, hover over their minarets, or perch on the gilded pinnacles of their rich domes, fretted and gold-embossed. The costumes of the people are picturesque and gaudy, and the environs are interesting.

It was early in Ramazan. Musket shots pealed frequent and loud without the walls, and cries and chanted songs came swelling

on the evening breeze. We stood beneath a mighty tree, whose leafy branches swarmed with storks, who alternately settled on the pinnacles of the mosque or perched there, while above us rose the lofty minaret, graceful and slender as a poplar or cedar-tree, yet with its capital illuminated and flashing with bright lamps, clear and brilliant. The sun was not quite obscured; and the gold-embossed roof of the mosque glowed in its last rays. If I should be doomed to live in a Turkish town, commend me to Eska-baba.

The country south of Eska-baba was full of well-mounted Turkish troopers, straggling about, their bridles covered with a load of red worsted tassels; strange wild horsemen, with arsenals of weapons, and very shabby clothes.

The noise the Mussulmen make all night,

during Ramazan, is something perfectly awful. Shouting, screaming, singing, howling forth barbarous chants, and firing musket shots, are amusements of which they never tire.

We felt excessively exhausted and languid every morning, from the hardness of the couches we had to repose upon after a long day's work. If people really wish to know what fatigue is, let them ride through Turkey, and they will have a good idea of it.

At Tchourlou or Eska-baba, I forget which, we bought some curiously-gilded pipe-heads of fawn-colour and gold, made in the town. I never saw the like at Constantinople, though gilded pipes are common.

Our breakfast equipage would have created a sensation in the West End. It was simply a black pot of milk, a tin jar of Turkish coffee, a tin bottle, a tin cup of

water, one tea and one table-spoon, a paper of sugar, a wooden tray of black rye bread, and a paper of coarse red pepper, bark, and salt.

We were always amused in the little towns by the huge cushions which the Jewesses wore on their heads, like bustles in the wrong place. Ravens, hawks, kites, and vultures, abound in the desert maidan; skeletons bestrew the ground, and the wolf and the wild dog howl over it at night.

But the most horrible sight is that of the carcass of a dead horse, from whose bones the dogs are tearing the flesh; and this revolting exhibition is constantly met with to the south of Adrianople. To add to the desolation, at every mile or two, come up the scourges of the land, the most ruthless robbers any land can be cursed with, a group of heavy-armed, wild Turkish riders, with

long guns at their backs ; grim, ferocious Moslems, who glare at an armed party, and pass them by, as a tiger would at a lion or leopard, but who treat a defenceless prey with outrage and cruelty.

Once we met a couple of fierce-looking Rayahs, mounted and armed to the teeth. They were Christian bandits, wearing black fur caps, and bristling all over with swords, yataghans, knives, daggers, and three pair of long Turkish pistols each. One scoundrel had a gun also.

They halted their horses; spoke to each other, then hesitated; and one fellow drew his pistol from his girdle. However, they rode slowly on, weapon in hand, glaring savagely and suspiciously at us, with two pair of wolfish eyes, that seemed rather to suit wild beasts than men.

The Turks, in their zeal for Ramazan,

made us fast as well as themselves; for they always refused us food until after sunset, during Ramazan.

There is a valley near Siliori that realizes the idea of the "Valley of the Shadow of Death" better than any one I ever saw. It is a huge, dark, gloomy, shadowy dell, sown thickly with carved tombstones and turbaned pillars with Arabic inscriptions.

There is a vast quantity of corn grown in the country; but principally black, not golden, grain waves over the Thracian plains.

For some distance the road winds along the sea-shore, with vineyards sloping down to the yellow, smooth sand. When first we came within sight of the dark blue waves of the Sea of Marmora, old Suleiman and I exclaimed at once, "El bahr!"

In the maidan we had often travelled for four or five hours, without seeing a tree or a house of any kind in the desert country, or anything but stone fountains ; and it was very refreshing to see the purple waters, the black, frowning mountains of Asia, and the mighty Mysian Olympus, with its snow-crowned peak.

A very long bridge crosses an arm of the sea near Siliori. Iovon, now and then, caught a tortoise crawling on the sand, where a number of sharp-prowed caiques were hauled up.

Slowly we toiled up a range of rough craggy hills : on the summit we paused. The Sea of Marmora, the mountain-land of Asia, the Bosphorus, the azure and bright Golden Horn—all sparkled before our eyes, as we looked eagerly over the great plain towards Imperial Stamboul.

And there was now neither doubt nor disappointment ; for in the sinking sun glittered the snowy minarets, the flashing alabaster pillars and columns, the golden domes and lofty palaces, in the glorious city of the Sultan—the goal of our long and weary pilgrimage—the Queen of the East—the capital of the Moslem—the city that stands like Venus arisen from ocean, or like a pearl in its open shell—the far-famed Constantinople.

THE END.

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